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USER REMIXES [EXTRA LENGTH]
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ANDREA PARKER
SI BEGG
TO GOOD TO BE TRUE
SATIVAE
BAKED GOODS
THE GOOD LIFE
MEDIA SICKNESS
PEOPLE POWER?
ANDREW WEATHERALL
NEW RELEASES
BOOK SELECTER
BOGDAN RACZYNSKI
COLIN McBEAN

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IMPORTANT NOTICE: Future versions of Overload Magazine will be published on a quarterly basis (four per year). And don't winge, because from Version 8.0 it will be a bigger publication containing more features, and will be accompanied by weekly reviews and other updates on www.overloadmedia.co.uk. Overload Version 8.0 out on 2nd July 2001.

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Flux

Friday 27th April
The Chunnel Club, Vauxhall, London, SE1

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SUBURBAN KNIGHT (UR - Exclusive UK)
CHRIS FINKE (Flux)
PENFOLD (Flux)
RYAN BLACKMAN (London)

Room 2
BRENDA RUSSELL (on_test / Base)
BLIP BLIP SOCIETY (Signal recordings)
(Plus Special Guests)

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DJ ROLANDO AKA THE AZTEC MYSTIC

Imitation is the highest form of flattery.
Talent borrows, genius steals.
Money is the root of all evil.

The Internet may yet strangle the music industry. The off-white hope of using computers to make, break, share and sell could become a well-rooted reality. Or everything may stay roughly as-was, but be quicker, smoother and more convenient. The old practices may survive the e-volution, with the Web rendered as the ultimate meeting place for supply and demand: just one big marketplace. These are tenuous times. In a society divided well beyond class, we are quickly categorised and reminded of apposite things to consume. Soon you may be the proud owner of something you can't yet afford and don't yet know you need. Amidst this conformity, the release of a techno record recently reminded us that the greatest possibility of cyberspace is it's ability to mobilise and organise the disparate. Resistance is still an option.

In electronic music the cover version has been usurped by the remix. Copying the material of others is rarely used as a tribute, although examples, like Anthony Rother's reading of 'Trans Europe Express', do exist. The need to provide radio with an instantly-recognisable hook, or to associate a fledgling artist with a respected past is not as pronounced either. The closest cousin is possibly the 'leg-up' scenario - Surgeon's remix of Dave Clarke's 'Storm' for instance. Covers, if they happen at all, tend to be ironic. They are still the mainstream's cornerstone, as they were for the likes of the Rolling Stones (first hit: 'I Wanna Be Your Man' written by The Beatles) and Motown (each track would be covered by at least two or three in-house artists). Our rave new world has encouraged us to work harder - to deconstruct rather than imitate. But technology brings clever stings. The 'tone-by-tone' remix is occurring, and new issues are being raised.

The Aztec Mystic (DJ Rolando) grew up in the latino-populated southwest of Detroit, literally in the shadow of Ford's mighty Rouge assembly plant. His music betrays the aspects of his upbringing, merging the natural rhythms and vibrancy of the neighbourhood with a techno sound that seduced him elsewhere in the city. When Sony Music copied the finest encapsulation of his technique ('Jaguar') without permission, they propagated a form of cultural imperialism. It's not only the music that is undermined, but also its messages and meanings. The situation was also an inversion of bootlegging - if someone in Rolando's street had been found duplicating Macy Gray CDs in their bedroom, they would probably still be serving a sentence. It was capitalist protectionism in its purest form - the strongest survives. Though Rolando, and his colleagues had other ideas.

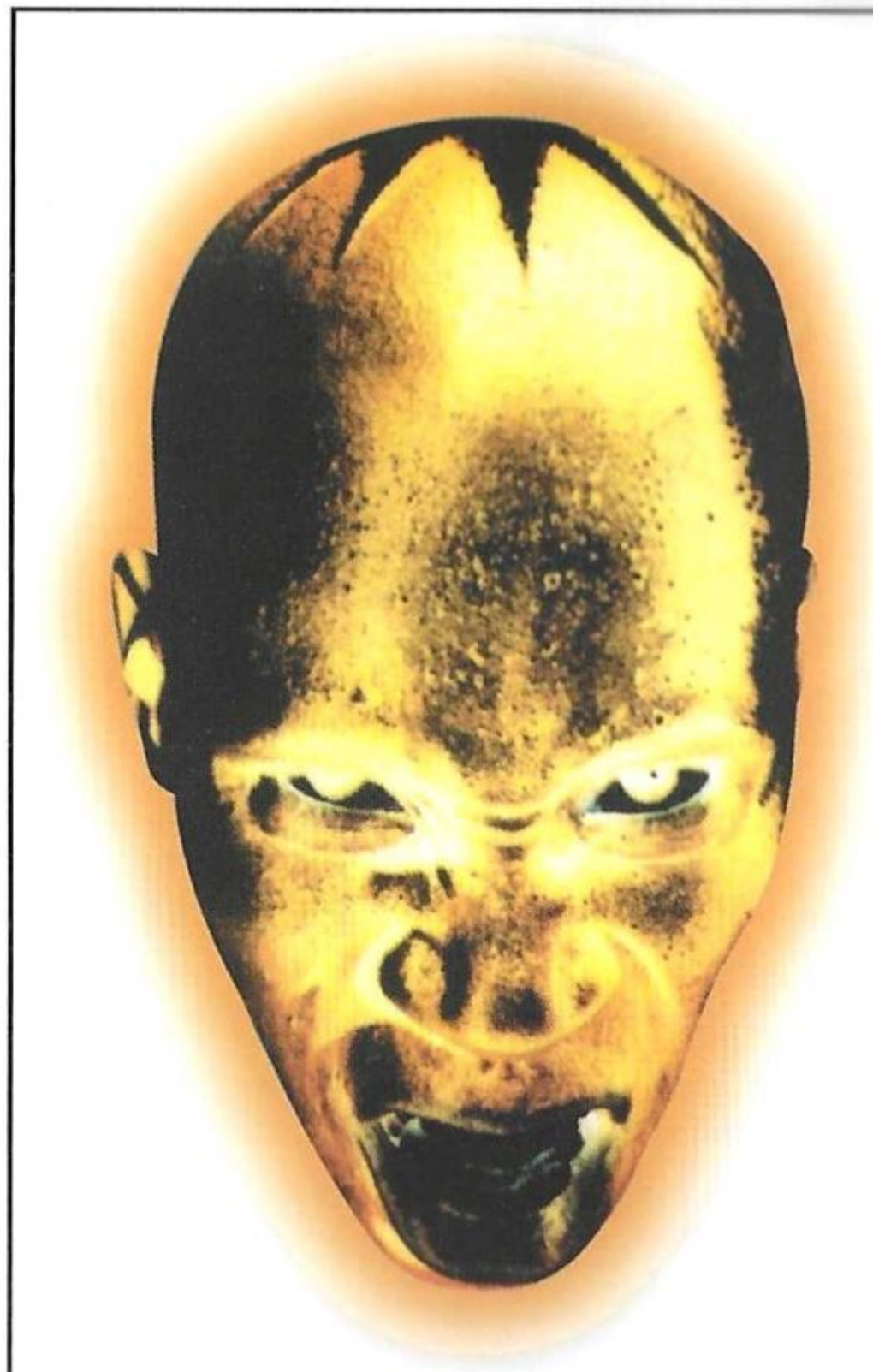
Underground Resistance were to play the corporates at their own game and win. The legions of record-buyers and UR fans ('killer bees' as they were christened collectively) orchestrated one of the Web's most concentrated campaigns of complaint. Having been encouraged in the past by UR not to purchase records "from any large commercial chain store" but support "knowledgeable speciality shops or local mom and pop stores", a *volte-face* was staged meaning the reactionary re-release of 'Jaguar' would be conducted centrally through chart-returning outlets. A video would be shot in Detroit to accompany it and promote the city's vitality. "That was the reason why I shot the video in my neighbourhood" explains Rolando. "I needed to show people where I come from and what it's about. When people think of Detroit they think of crime and a rundown city, vacant buildings, crackheads and all that. I wanted to show all the positive sides to it. Like any other city it has its good and bad points. It's like a magnet - it pulls me back always." The only connotive content approved by Sony for the 'illegal' version was an Ecstacy tablet which decorated the cover. The two intentions could not be further apart. Finally, to fend off the re-licensing of the track from Sony to BMG, UR released a remix package one month prior, leaving the cover-version dead in the water. These tactics have been incorrectly interpreted as a sell-out, something the producer has to grudgingly acknowledge: "I still haven't seen the video myself, but everybody's called me and been like 'hey man, I saw your video on MTV!' That's cool, it was just something we had to do, y'know, we felt it was right. Some people may not have believed in the way we did it but hey, fuck it man, that's the way the shit happen."

So what mark has the episode left on the record's producer? "Now I know how Derrick feels with 'Strings Of Life'" he admits. "He had that added pressure. At first I was a bit intimidated and worried but as time passed I felt confident in myself. I get it all the time; 'Hey! When you playin' Jaguar? You startin' off with it?!' To be honest I think there's been two or three sets since where I haven't included Jaguar - and I caught hell from that! I didn't hear the end of it and I was like 'I can't do that again!' But that's how DJing goes. Musically I felt pressure because people were thinking 'OK, we'll wait for the next one, compare it to that record'. We'll see what happens when the time is right."

'Underground' as an abstract adjective or collective noun means very little. It doesn't come with a set of regulations. It's defined by, and exhibited as an attitude. The actions of UR wholly befit their provocative name. To enlighten the music-buying population, to confound the expectation that what is popular must be of little worth, and to promote the representation of a people through mainstream channels requires inclusivity. Or put simply by Rolando; "Who are we to say 'You can't listen to this, but you can'. It's a good quality piece of music and it should be out there for everybody man."

Your failed systems will be overcome electronically and eliminated worldwide.
Know your enemy.
We are older.

WORDS> Nick Doherty



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ART OF DARKNESS

"I'm actually the complete opposite of how people imagine me from my music," states ANDREA PARKER. This is true. Listen to Andrea's new release, 'The Dark Ages', with its yawning bass and thick, moody atmospheres, and you imagine her as some kind of introverted, super-serious goth. In reality, she's chatty, friendly and giggles a lot. But then, when you make music as undeniably sinister as Andrea often does, it's not surprising she gets tagged as 'dark'. Unable to shake the label, she's decided to embrace it.

"I was pissed with Terranova one night," she explains, "And they just sprayed it along the wall - 'There's no-one darker than Andrea Parker'![laughs] I've been fighting against this dark thing with the press for so bloody long now, I thought, 'Right, I'll call the record 'The Dark Ages' and have 'no1darker' as my email address! [more laughs]"

Pointing to the old axiom about comedians using humour to mask their gloom, Andrea struggles to explain the contrast: "I think it's because I'm such a 'Sound' person - I love low bass, I like cellos, and they're a lot darker than, y'know, flutes and these f**king happy hi-hats that they put in house music nowadays. I don't know really, because I'm really not dark at all. But then I love horror films and soundtracks that are a bit dark as well. I don't know - it's like why do some people love trance and some techno?"

She started out in music as a session singer for hardcore producers, but soon tired of being a hired hand, saying that listening to the likes of Ryuichi Sakamoto, Steve Reich and Philip Glass made her want to get into making sounds - "that whole analog cyber thing" she says blithely, as if I should know what the hell she means. Today she takes her sounds wherever she can find them: cutlery, carwashes.

Indeed, her DJ career began by experimenting with sound effects records on three decks and led to a five-year residency in Lost's second room. A move into production was inevitable, and recorded output began with Inky Blacknuss, her collaboration with Alex Knight and Ian Tregoning. Yet it was a chance meeting with Renaat and Katrin from R&S at Lost which led to her hookup with David Morley, the German producer with whom she's worked ever since and of whose collection of vintage synths she is in permanent awe.

"We've been working together for years now," says Andrea of Morley, "and he's like my musical soulmate, the one person that understands me with music. We just got on, he's got no ego at all and it's all really, really easy for us."

Their first venture together was Two Sandwiches Short Of A Lunchbox's 'Too Good To Be Strange' on R&S's Apollo spinoff, which they followed a year later in 1995 with 'Angular Art' on pivotal but now-deceased UK techno imprint Infonet. A deal with Mo'Wax was next and over the next five years Andrea - together with David and, occasionally, Uschi Classen - released a handful of EPs like the much-feted 'Rocking Chair', which featured some 40 members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and had to be re-cut ten times because of its immense, gut-shaking bass. As if that wasn't enough, her solo album for Mo'Wax, 'Kiss My Arp', proved beyond all doubt hat Andrea Parker just doesn't do things by halves.

Another example of this is Andrea's frequent inclusion of vocals, although they don't feature on 'The Dark Ages'. Why? "I don't really classify myself as a singer, it's just another thing that I do and it's not like I think I'm particularly good at it either. And it's quite hard singing over the music that I write, I can assure you [giggles]!"

This explains why she's amazed to hear that someone has taken the time to write out her lyrics and put them up on the Net: "That's a bit frightening, isn't it? I thought I'd put enough effects on them so they'd be disguised!"

"Lyrics do take me a long time," she continues, "and you're not always inspired to sit down and write a song. I always do the music first, though. It's something that's really important to me, actually - I don't like all that 'wave your hands in the air' stuff."

Since being dropped by Mo'Wax, her new home for the time being is Quatermass, a division of Belgian label Sub Rosa. In the meantime her own label, Touchin' Bass, is close to leaving the drawing board: "It's going to be very electronic. The first release is by myself featuring [DJ] Godfather, but I'm going to get Ed [DMX] in. But I've also got people like Gescom, who are Autechre, and Tipper, who are giving me tracks. The main thing about the label is going to be bass - as long as there's a fat bassline, then I'm happy! [laughs]"

Electro is the common thread that runs through Andrea Parker's music and DJing, contrary to musical fashion: "I have a massive, massive passion for the 808," she explains, "I love the sound of that drum machine, so I think it has a lot to do with that. Electro's really funky, there's something about it I just love. I'm not actually very keen on the type of electro where they just recycle old Newcleus samples, though, I like it to move forward."

"I'm one of those people who's gone through experimental music, I've gone through hip-hop, old Chicago house music, all the Detroit stuff and techno. So sometimes I do a hip-hop set, sometimes I do a full-on electro set, but at the moment I've got a new one because I'm playing a lot of ghetto-tech, Miami bass and booty, which has kind of followed through from the electro because hip-hop and electro is my main thing."

Doesn't she have a problem with ghetto tech's misogynistic lyrics, I wonder. "No, I find it really funny," she replies quickly, and perhaps a little naïvely, "I'm not a feminist, you see, so I don't really give a fuck."

But then it's a question she's had to face before: "I've got loads of hassle from having a Magic Mike remix of 'The Unknown'. I did an interview in Japan and they were like, 'Don't you think it's bad having a Miami bass guy doing a remix because of that music's lyrical content?' And I thought, that's a good one, coming from a culture where you can buy used schoolgirl's knickers from a vending machine!"

'The Dark Ages' is out now on Quatermass.

WORDS> Tom Magic Feet

Begg's Belief

Proprietor of Noodles, the appropriately (self) termed 'Stupidest Recording Organisation in The World', SI BEGG is rapidly becoming one of dance music's most adaptable and idiosyncratic movers and shakers.

And as you'd expect from someone with such an impressive accolade, Si Begg is also very, very busy. "Non stop" he comments revealing that, following the forthcoming 'Death Of Cool Part 2' compilation on his madcap Noodles imprint, an album for high profile audiophiles Novamute is also imminent. "Oooh, hot of the press" he jests as we sit in a pub near his North London base, "under the name S.I. Futures, a kind of a mock corporate vibe going on." Recording under such curious aliases as Buckfunk 3000, Bigfoot and Cabbage Boy, you'd be forgiven for believing this is an artist whose penchant for monikers was born of self-amusement. "I think it's a kind of necessity because of the way the industry works," Si continues. "I've decided to give them [Novamute] a new pseudonym because they wanted it exclusive and I didn't really want to give Si Begg exclusive to anyone. If there was one label that I felt was my home and I didn't want to do stuff for other labels then that would be fine, but no single label is willing to release my full output - my full range."

Indeed, his recording activities during the late Nineties charter a crazed course. Since debuting with Cristian Vogel on Thomas Heckmann's Trope imprint, Begg has stamped his unpredictable groove into labels such as Eukatech, Sativae, Fuel, Tresor, Language and N-Tone - not forgetting his joint project with Vogel, Mosquito. From genre-hopping breakbeat hybrids to raw machine funk, he always seems a fair distance from the nearest pigeonhole. "The normal procedure with an artist is to align yourself with a certain style or movement, and that does make life a lot easier" he theorises. "If you're a techno DJ then you play the techno clubs and you make twelves and remixes that techno people will like. With me it varies. I like all kinds of music so I make all kinds of music. It's just logical."

Growing up in Leamington Spa where he used to "muck about" in band activities, Si would watch guitar hardcore like Napalm Death and Bolt Thrower then return home to immerse himself in Kraftwerk, Tangerine Dream and an ever growing assortment of guitar peddles. Around the time he realised he'd no acoustic instruments left he met up with Brighton-based innovator Cristian Vogel. Vogel, who'd attended the same school one year below made contact upon hearing of Si's affection for analogue synths ("he just had computers and stuff and was much more on a sampling tip"). Together with the likes of Subhead and Neil Landstrumm, he helped characterise the quirky techno sound at the time emerging from Brighton and Edinburgh - a style with a distinctively different blueprint to the ensuing onslaught of minimal club techno. "At the time I thought I was a techno guy making techno, and all of a sudden a year later everyone else was going off somewhere else. Me, Cristian and Neil [Landstrumm] were going in a completely different direction, and all of a sudden no one was really into what we were doing. It split when the Jeff Mills thing really hit in."

Si seems all too conscious of how today's record-buying public have been affected by the rise in DJ culture and how pioneers like Jeff Mills set loose a wave of releases built solely for DJ manipulation. "It's true, but with most styles of music really. Like with breaks for example, people use stuff that's just tools. I just get bored with the minimal stuff - bores me rigid. It's just my personality. I would never say any kind of music is worse or better than any other, it doesn't really matter how clever it is or how complicated it is, it's just what *I* like. I love stuff cutting in and out, things suddenly appearing from nowhere. I blame it on TV, low attention span." When his debut solo album 'First Class Ticket To Telos' was released in 1998 under the name of Buckfunk 3000, his radical production ethic was displayed in jaw-dropping style as he mashed drum n' bass, techno, electro, hip hop and numerous other influences into a frenetic yet highly structured beat feast. "Buckfunk 3000 was intended as an antidote to that purist (or should I say fascist) attitude," he commented in Magic Feet magazine back in 1998. Techno junkies and beat-freaks alike hailed the sheer bloody-mindedness of the release, Radio One DJ Pete Tong played the single 'Fried Funk and Microchips', one track even got licensed to a Goa trance compilation in Japan. "Because my music's not so genre conscious it means you can still listen and enjoy it two years later. It's not very 'of the moment' because it's so unstylish, or not of a certain style." Easy, then, to see where the title 'The Death Of Cool' comes from...

"I would never say any kind of music is worse or better than any other, it doesn't really matter how clever it is or how complicated it is, it's just what I like. I love stuff cutting in and out, things suddenly appearing from nowhere. I blame it on TV, low attention span."

So what of Noodles? Is it really the silliest recording organisation in the world? I ask. "Stupidest, by far..." Si corrects quickly, as if my analogous terminology is way off mark. "It's stupid in that most other labels would never consider doing that many styles all on one label, techno and breakbeats and everything all mixed up together - stupid in that respect, and kind of commercial suicide." Although it contained some very unhinged music from some very unhinged musicians, when 'The Death Of Cool Part One' was released in 1998 those that managed to get past the freaky sleeve found audio amusement in great abundance. "It was one of those things that kind of appeared and disappeared - a bit of a cult phenomenon really," Si recounts. "Loads of people were really into it, and I still hear people now going 'that mad country and western track, and those birds -what the fuck's all that about?'" It's somewhat unsurprising that he's chosen to release '...Part Two' in conjunction with one of the few stables to offer refuge from genre-specific repression, Tony Morley's Leaf label. "I met with Tony and played him the first rough bits and he was really into it. I thought 'wicked, he's someone who really understands.' Not everyone really understands the Noodles thing..."

It would seem his versatility as a both a producer and DJ lies in his ability to examine music for its merits rather than perceived faults. Few DJs could spin techno at Sven Vath's new club one week and rock Ninjá Tune events or Big Beat Boutique the next ("I play [breaks] stuff at techno clubs and then try to play techno stuff at breaks clubs and see what happens!"). I later find that, unaware the mini-disc is still recording, he's been humming into the microphone whilst I'm at the bar, nasally remixing the dodgy prog rock from the nearby jukebox.

Surely this is someone who advocates the adage 'different moods for different grooves...' "When you listen to a piece of music or you buy a piece of music you have to consider the environment it's designed for" he rationalises. "A lot of my mates don't like dance music at all, but they never listen to it in clubs. They might hear a record or hear something on the radio first thing in the morning at 9 o'clock when they're trying to have their breakfast, and well of course you don't like it it's not meant for that, but if you have a few drinks, come down to the club and you'll hear what it's all about. And just the same with other kinds of music, non-dance music, experimental stuff - you should listen to when you're on your own going for a walk or something." Whilst he sees there to be "lots of different environments for music," he's the first to point out that "most people have their parameters". "If you're just driving the car or doing the washing up, you just want to hear something that's not going to annoy you, you just want something that's pleasant in the background - that's what pop music's for. I don't think it takes much to open people's minds a bit. A lot of people who come to the Big Beat Boutique hoping to see Fatboy Slim. I always find the warm up slot a real challenge - trying to get them dancing without having to play something horrible."

Though he's not one to turn down press, like many of his contemporaries he places notable blame with the mainstream music media for stifling the popularity of electronic music from the cutting edge. "It's like Q Magazine, they're trying to be so Rock and Roll and it's run by a bunch of 40 year olds. I think Oasis and bands like that are so not Rock and Roll, kids don't like that kind of music, young kids, they like S Club 7 or Eminem, or Prodigy - something with a bit of balls, they don't like this tedious old guitar stuff. All these magazines used to harp on about dance music and know they're letting a few in through the door, especially if you've got a lead singer or someone who'll jump around. 'Prodigy, okay we'll let them in. Chemical Brothers - they recorded with Oasis, we'll let them in'. I've got a friend who used to write for Select and I'm always trying to get him into stuff. When the first Super_Collider came out I said 'look, you'll like this', and he'll be like 'I like the Chemical Brothers, I like Skint but that's a step too far for me. 'A lot of the problem I have is the fact that so much hangs with recognition. You go to see a band live, you'll tend to have already bought the album and you know it all as soon as it comes on. And to an extent that's what dance music is like, the garage lot forever sampling, ripping each other off and using the same riffs over and over again, sounds everyone recognises, that bass sound, that break, giving people something familiar then putting new twists on it - to an extent techno works like that. No one likes it if you do a whole new style of techno overnight. If it's building on something someone's done before people will be okay with it, but if it's something completely different...'whoa, scary.'"

Prepare to be scared by the stupid revolution.

SI BEGG'S ALL TIME TOP TEN (in no particular order)

1) NEGATIVLAND 'Helterstupid' (SSR)
2) CYBOTRON 'Clear' (Fantasy)
3) FRANK ZAPPA 'Apostrophe' (CBS)
4) KRAFTWERK 'Computer World' (EMI)
5) PUBLIC ENEMY NO.1 'Fear Of A Black Planet' (Def Jam)
6) STEVE REICH 'Desert Music' (Nonesuch Digital)
7) PARLIAMENT 'Hydraulic Funk' (CBS)
8) BEACH BOYS 'Smile!' (Vigitone (bootleg/capitol))
9) MILES DAVIS 'On The Corner' (BGO)
10) HAWKWIND 'Hall Of The Mountain Grill' (Liberty)

SI BEGG'S 'TEN THAT WHIFF' (Noodles/S.I. Futures)

1) SHAKE 'My Computer Is Optimistic' (Frictional)
2) SIMPLY JEFF 'Funky Instrumentalist' (Bad Motherfucker NYC)
3) LESSER 'Gearhound' (Matador)
4) MATMOS 'California Rhinoplasty EP' (Matador)
5) BOLZ BOLZ 'Human Race LP' (Feis)
6) CECIL LEUTER 'Pop Electronique' (Dare Dare)
7) NEIL LANDSTRUMM 'EP' (Neue Heimat)
8) V/A 'Sound Off' (Fuel)
9) 'We Are Not A Rock Band' (S.I. Futures)
10) TIM WRIGHT 'EP' (Novamute)

V/A 'The Death Of Cool Part 2' is out shortly on Noodles / The Leaf Label.

For the full Overload interview with Si Begg visit www.overloadmedia.co.uk.

WORDS> Theresa Green

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first cut 03 :: chez papa : hr corp**
gecko 07 :: andy bowman
matrix 015 :: alenia
parallel 010 :: velocette
parotic 08 :: dj slip
patterns of change 05 :: unknown
sheer 011 :: esther ofei
spore 03 :: alenia
xtra lenght 03 :: user**

NEW WORLDWIDE EXCLUSIVES

null records 0.1 :: aeox
release party 13.04.01@panorama bar : ostgut : berlin
schema f 01 :: frank yentner

GERMANY EXCLUSIVES FOR APRIL

automatic 006 :: ibrahim alfa
cetron 04 :: h&r
coda 04 :: hiroaki izuka
context 06 :: tbc
de style 01 :: random noize
instillation 015 :: frank hunter
mono 08 :: frank hunter
parallel 011 :: velocette
sheer 012 :: abi lonnenberg
sheep 023 :: grooveman
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tt 001 :: v.a
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xtra lenght 04 :: user : utilityplastics**

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EXCLUSIVES

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**WORLDWIDE

echnoton :: first cut :: null records :: schema f :: laufwerk :: xtra length

comin' very soon **semi-automatic** and **mental.ind.records****

Too good to be true

Civilisation has long had a dysfunctional relationship with the concept of fame. Scan the magazine racks in your local newsagents or flick through the channels on your TV and your basest Darwinian desires will be made flesh in the all-too-perfect shapes of Posh & Becks, Madonna & Guy, Robbie & this week's tabloid favourite. There's no getting away from them, and that's the way it's supposed to be. They're famous. It's their job.

As so clearly displayed in the above list of names, the business of celebrity is in equal measure crass and compelling. The media creates these icons to play a part, becoming dehumanised entities, symbolising all the things we want and need. Whether secretly or overtly, we all strive for the qualities these figures embody: the assurance, the affluence, the influence. In short, everyone wants to be a star, but a curious flipside to this situation is that, for some reason, the stars appear to want to be just like us too.

Read almost any article and three little words bear up this bizarre phenomenon. Journalists are constantly amazed by just how "down to earth" the beautiful people really are - *no, I mean REALLY.* In the current lowest-common-denominator-driven cultural climate, it is as if to say: "If these multi-millionaire boys and girls next door can do it, then so can you - just look at how *normal* Westlife are!" What's more, they themselves, their PR companies, record labels and agents want us to believe it too. Populism is only one step away from popularity and that's the name of the game.

But we've got the people's Prime Minister, we've had the people's Princess and every well-known face is going for that *proletarian* look, so what could possibly come next. "Hey, let's create the *people's* pop group!" cry a clever bunch of TV execs. And, of course, now we've got precisely that. Following on from the medium's interminable obsession with docusoaps - responsible for bringing such "characters" as Jeremy Spake from Airport and Maureen Rees from Driving School to our screens - and the thoroughly reprehensible Big Brother, Popstars is the ultimate expression of this worrying trend. Hear'Say, the band that resulted from this bout of gladiatorial mass humiliation, have recently graced the cover of The Face and are at number one in the charts as I write. So, there you go - there's nothing to it.

It's all a million light years away from the preening egotism and elitist posturing that led Lester Bangs to slam original stadium-filling rockers Led Zeppelin as "emaciated fops" and decry The Rolling Stones for becoming distanced from their audience. But Bangs' idea was that of rock as real *folk* music, a visceral artform made by people who still knew what it was like to live among the great unwashed, to be angry, to protest. He wasn't looking for the bland homogeneity of the contemporary landscape, rather a certain corporeal grit embodied by the likes of Iggy And The Stooges and the MC5. They may not have been raffish dandies but certainly weren't Top Shop and Friends types either - they still had presence and chutzpah in spades.

Such ideals were to find fruition in the punk movement. With its all-inclusive DIY ethos absolutely anyone could rock, thus doing away with the need for heroes - you could be your own! Over time, this attitude filtered down into many scenes, the most notable example being acid house. Thanks to relatively cheap technology and a fair-whack of can-do spirit, raving opened the floodgates for vast creativity in the form of production, DJing or even running your own club. It was there for the taking, and to a large extent still is. However, as with dance culture as a whole, this original everyman ideology has been co-opted and corrupted by major labels, marketing departments and the wrong sort of people. As a result, we seem to have missed the point - that it was all about being and doing something DIFFERENT.

Last week, while at home for a family gathering, I had the misfortune to catch Fragma's god-awful "Every Time You Need Me" on MTV. Unfortunately, it's just the sort of fluffy pop trance my young nieces and nephews love (despite my best efforts to get them into DJ Scud, Speedranch and Diamanda Galas). But watching the video was an education. Halfway through, the pneumatic blonde 'singer' plays the role of an office girl standing at a photocopier, wishing the days away - reinforcing the fact that she is just like everyone else despite all the evidence to the contrary. "Do you like this?" one of the kids asked me. "Why not", she continued after my negative response. "I think it's nice and so does my mum." Nuff said

Maybe it's me getting old, but I seem to remember my parents hating my music - and me loving it all the more as a result. My bands were revolting and so was I. But that all seems to have changed. Walking down the road to do my weekly radio show a couple of days ago, I bumped into a group of teenagers in Slipknot and Limp Bizkit tees coming round the corner. When they saw the record bag slung over my shoulder, two of them burst into a chorus of "DOOF DOOF DOOF DOOF", mimicking the sound of a kickdrum then cracking up laughing. To them, I was just another old duffer with tiresome taste in music. And in a world of vastly overpaid DJs and household names such as Moby and The Chemical Brothers who look and act like their embarrassing uncles, I can hardly blame them for such a sweeping judgement. It's all got a little bit BORING.

In fact, rather than dumbing down, it appears we are determined to *dull* down and that's a big problem. Dumb can be bloody good fun sometimes (and I've got the Motorhead records to prove it) but dull is always precisely that. So here, I throw down the gauntlet and demand more bad behaviour, stupidity and all-round irresponsibility in the world of electronic music - otherwise the kids are going to get their kicks somewhere else. I mean, what wouldn't you give to see Derrick May hurling a television out of a window, Jeff Mills driving a Rolls Royce into a swimming pool or Carl Craig setting fire to his records. It would definitely work. And sorry fellas, if you don't I'm going to start buying S Club 7 CDs. At least they know the draw - oops, I mean score.

WORDS> Dave Stelfox

Label Profiles

SATIVAE recordings

Grinding its way across the dancefloor like a robot James Brown, the sound of Sativae Recordings has been flying the flag for fucked up floor fodder since 1994.

It was 1991 when Edinburgh-based party collective Sativa first took their fresh European techno sound to the clubs of East Scotland's historic city. Integrating guests such as Dave Clarke and Spiral Tribe's live PAs Crystal Distortion and 69DB with rising local talents like Neil Landstrumm and Tobias Schmidt, the nights ran very successfully before ending abruptly on a high note in '96. Of the huge production crew involved, it was Dave Tarrida and Steve Glencross who took charge of Sat main musical concerns, and in 1994, whilst the club was in its prime, the pair formed Sativae Recordings as a vehicle to showcase music from both the club's many reputable guests, such as DJ Hell, Cristian Vogel and Adam X, and also the city's healthy crop of homegrown producers.

Those recognising names in the paragraph above may be led somewhat correctly to assume that the musical tone of Sativae is dark, spiky and unashamedly hard-hitting. "I suppose it's not very sellable music," smiles Steve. "Our main market is Germany really, that's where we sell most of our records. I think it's a shame there's not more people in the UK."

So, how would they describe the Sativae sound? And if it's not very sellable, who the hell's been playing it? I ask. "Some of the reviews in Overload have inspired us," Steve remarks. "One of them described us as being a label that's 'dark n' fucked up', and that's hit the nail on the head. You'd be surprised because a lot of people who you'd think would hate our records, like Laurent Garnier and Sven Vath, who are renowned for playing straight club music, they really like our music, which is bizarre. It's not accessible club stuff that's easy to play."

Since Dave Tarrida relocated in Spain two years ago, and Glencross to London, Sativae, together with its sister label Drought (conceived in '96), has been run on a spilt London/Barcelona axis. Since the two labels feed from a similar pool of artists, I asked if each imprint had its separate agenda. "Yes" answers Steve. "At the beginning of Drought we had trouble defining what we put out on each, we knew we wanted to keep Sativae for Dark, hard club tracks, Drought had to be slightly more eclectic. Y'know, there's stuff on Drought that even has a bit of melody in it, which is unusual for us. We've also put out dub stuff by Tobias, and the new one by Q-IC and Stephenson has a breakbeat track."

And what about the now-terminated Penalty offshoot? Five killer EPs of experiment electro that's been sending backrooms across the globe in to fits of frenzied body-popping. "We started getting into electro more, not cliched electro, just non-4/4 beats. We got in touch with people who had done stuff for us before, like Tobais and Jamie Lidell, and others too like DMX crew. We didn't want to start a whole new label - it had to have a beginning and an end. It was totally inspired by Interdimensional Transmissions and we openly admit that." But why 'Penalty'? Because the World Cup was on, of course...

Having earned a steadfast reputation for their turntable skills as well as their own music production, the pair are ready to back up their recent releases on Sativae and Penalty with new EPs for German labels Neue Heimat and Tresor. Having played in Japan on a couple of occasions and also Eastern Europe and Russia ("I was sponsored by the British Council to go out and do gigs and radio in St Petersburg"), Steve seems keen to take his vibrant brand of machine funk further from home once more. But with two compilations (Sativae and Drought artists doing club cuts on one, and a Drought comp based most around ambient soundtracks), a mixed Penalty album and a Penalty video for Jamie Lidell's 'Planet Rock' re-edit off Penalty #5, it would seem there's plenty of graft to be done before the next phase of darkness takes hold.

The 'In Study EP' by Q-IC And Stephenson is out shortly on Drought.

WORDS> Theresa Green

Label Profiles

Baked Goods

Mmmmm. Eccles cakes, Carrs pasties, Manchester Tart, Uncle Joe's Mint Balls.. just some of the mouthwatering local delicacies that the North West of England has to offer. Yes, you can expect to gain a few pounds of lard on your waistline if you choose to indulge when you visit the Rainy City of Manchester. But help is at hand. There is an alternative form of "Baked Goods" that will only fatten up your record collection, and not your arse.

"Baked Goods" is a distribution company set up in Manchester about a year ago, dealing with the growing demand for cutting edge electronica and other avant garde beats coming mainly from Europe, USA and the UK. "Baked" are the baby of a 3-part family started off by the specialist record store Pelicanneck, up on the 3rd floor of Manchester's famous alternative shopping emporium, Afflecks Palace. Schlom at Pelicanneck, later set up a sister record label with his contacts in Berlin, the hotly vaunted City Centre Offices.

Yep, these boys seem to be runnin' 'tings on the Northern Electronica scene,so I went to pay them a visit, listen to some mouthwatering local delicacies,and see what they had to say for themselves..

(various answers to questions,from Schlom and Chad at Peliccaneck,and Simon And Howard at Baked Goods Distribution)

Who / what labels should people check out this year?

Invisible Spies, Obliq, ADSR, ScSi, Morr Music.

Explain the City Centre Offices phenomenon?

"CCO is the Pelicanneck label - run together with Thaddi Hermann in Berlin."

What have you got up your sleeves for this summer?

"Lots of label showcases / "Off-Peak"nights,with Morr Music,CCO, Lux Niagra, V/VM, Hot Air(Stockhausen and Walkman...also from Manchester) etc."

Behind the masks, are V/V/M really 'nice' people, who visit their mum's regularly and never swear?

"James Kirby (aka V/VM) is a real mummys boy, knitted jumpers an'all."

What's the most memorable / original packaging you've seen?

"Anything on Raster Noton, Lux Niagra or Lucky Kitchen."

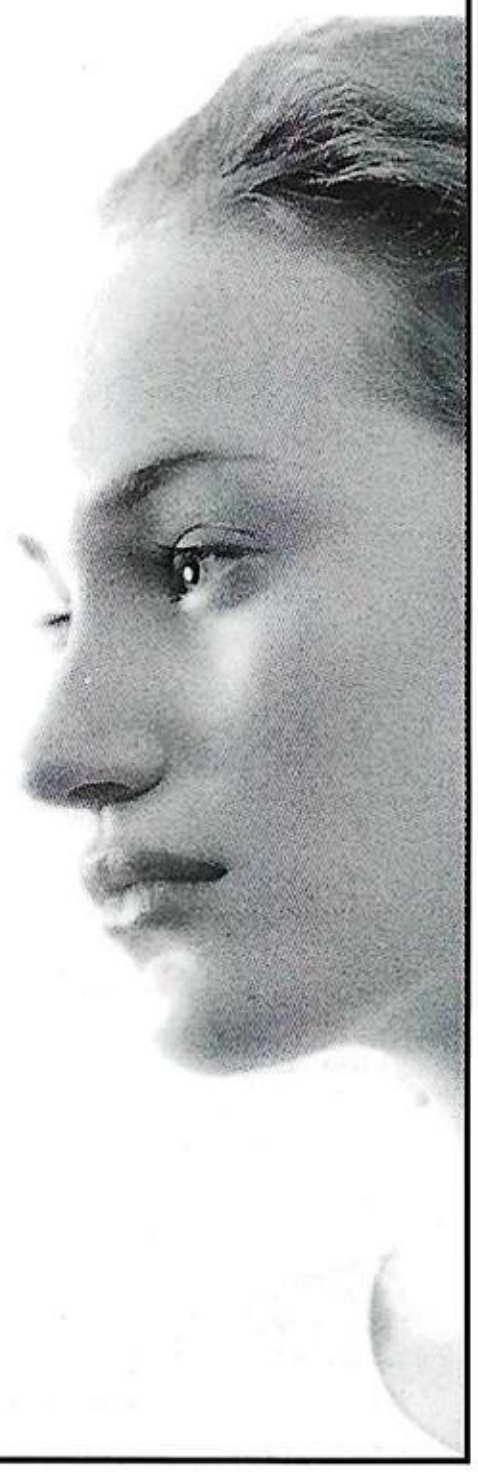
What is your favourite baked goodie on your lunch break?

"Sweet potato triangles."

Top Ten 'Baked Goods' Ever

Toah Dynamic-"Movement"-The Invisible Spies L.P
Arovane-"Tides"-CCO -LP
Zorn-"Tower Park"-Lux Niagra 12"
Skanfrom-"Talking Translator"-ADSR-7"
Kid 606-"Attitude"-Tigerbeat 6 / V/VM- 7"/cd
Robert Lippok-"Open Close"-cd
Mum-"Ballad" 12"
Geiom -"Blanket"- 7" on CCO (latest release)
SND - "Travelog" 12"
Multicast-"Laura" - Obliq-10"

WORDS> Zwei Katzen



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The good life...

Leaving aside Popstars for a minute (can we, please?), the music industry has just one thing on its mind. Napster - 'the controversial music-sharing website' - has dominated the news for the last eighteen months, with scarcely a week out of the headlines. Every week my download-mad friend Dave relays the latest twist in the saga to me - as if the hundreds of column and screen inches and Newsnight specials weren't enough to do the job.

Everyone knows the story by now. To the music biz, Napster is the greatest threat since forever. And it's not just the industry machine that hates Napster. Big name acts like Metallica and, oh, what's his name. Dr Dre (sorry, forgot about you for a sec there, Doc) have famously come out against Shawn Fanning's dorm-room project.

To those of us who inhabit the other end of the spectrum, the so-called 'credible' independent sector, where records sell in the couple of thousand, this seems to make the issue reassuringly clear-cut: when already minted rock stars bitch about forgoing royalties they clearly don't actually *need*, it's all too easy to dismiss the anti-Napster lobby as a bunch of greedy bastards. (Things are always so much simpler when it's 'them' against 'us', after all.) But how many artists at our level ever stop to think about their role in all this?

Underlying this premise, and, indeed, the entire debate surrounding Napster and other file-sharing systems, is one simple, unspoken assumption; namely, that musicians automatically *deserve* to get paid for their work. And at first sight, it seems an obvious enough principle. Do you call in a plumber to fix your leaky tap, demanded Metallica, and then expect not to have to pay him? It's the same thing, they said -you're stealing food from an artist's table with every download.

But Metallica are wrong. Making music is *not* like being a plumber. Plumbers have to get up every day and go out to do a boring, repetitive and dirty job, and I doubt you'll find many who do it out of choice. Same for bus drivers, teachers, people who work in call centres, the list goes on: these are real jobs, exactly the kind of thing musicians are trying to avoid, and people deserve to be paid a decent rate for doing them. Making music, on the other hand, *is* a lifestyle choice. Musicians only have to get up and do something they profess to love. Hardly a 'job', is it?

And music, like poetry or art or acting, is one of those occupations in which you are, frankly, *supposed* to struggle. 95% of musicians out there don't make a living off it anyway, so what makes the other 5% think they have a god-given right to? You're supposed to spend ten years living in a grotty little hole eating cold baked beans before you have any success, dammit. It goes with the territory; in fact, it's an essential part of the process. As a certain famously militant Detroit techno character once told me, there is no soul without struggle. It might sound trite, but it's true.

Of course music enriches our culture. At least, some of it does, anyway. Unfortunately most music is little more than a poor photocopy of someone else's brilliant idea and most record labels put out records to pay the bills, *not* to enhance our cultural experience. If 98% of recorded music in the world was wiped out tomorrow, would we really be any worse off? This applies equally to small-time dance and electronic artists just as it does to stadium rock acts.

A couple of years ago I interviewed Richie Hawtin and asked him why he didn't put out very many records. His answer was that he didn't need to. He realises he is in a privileged position of being able to live very well from his DJing alone and so, because he doesn't need to pump out the tunes to make a living, he won't. Instead he prefers to only put music out when he really thinks he has something worth releasing. Indeed, Hawtin doesn't just see this as an option, he sees it as an artistic duty.

What a contrast with most of the other producers I've talked to over the years. I've lost count of the number of times interviewees have complained about how much dross there is out there without for a second considering that they themselves might be part of the problem. It's so hard, they whine, without ever considering that maybe they've actually been taking the soft option all along. Working in Burger King for eight hours straight is hard. Sitting in a warm studio smoking spliffs and twiddling knobs, by comparison, is easy.

Look at the situation we're in now: dance music producers commonly pump out ten records or more a year to keep the wages coming in, with remixes and the rest on top of that. The end result is an over-stuffed market where everyone sells less and less, and the 1% of truly exciting records are buried under a mountain of mediocrity. And for the individual artist, more is less, too: every average record you put out detracts from your reputation, cheapens your best work by association. People moan about how Derrick May hasn't made a record in years - I say he deserves more of our admiration because of it.

See, money and music just don't mix. The history of popular music is littered with bands who made one amazing album at the start of their careers when they were skint, then lost their fire when the money came rolling in. It's the same in dance and electronic music. Producers make one great record, then spend the rest of their careers failing to match it because they couldn't stay hungry. Can you name a single artist whose music was *really* improved by the addition of more filthy lucre to the equation?

And, lest we forget, music isn't supposed to be a commodity, it's supposed to be art. You producers out there, *why* are you doing it anyway? Is it to express yourself or to improve your standard of living? Are you putting out that record because someone asked you to and you could do with a couple of extra hundred quid, or because you think the human cultural canon will benefit from it? Isn't it just enough that more people will hear it? Maybe if a few more started asking themselves the same questions, we wouldn't be drowning in rubbish like we are now.

At this point you might be thinking this is all just a trifle hypocritical coming from a music writer. After all, what did critics ever add to the world? True enough, but then I don't *expect* to make a living from writing alone, which is why I have a part-time job and do other things as well as writing to make money. And no, I won't get paid for this article either. Like a musician, being a music writer allows me to avoid doing a 9-5 and live a certain sort of lifestyle doing something that I enjoy. The sacrifice I make is a steady income. That's just how it is.

Not for a minute am I suggesting that artists should go without revenue from records sold whilst record labels grow fat from the profits. What I am suggesting, however, is that artists shouldn't make music in order to make a living. Because when they do, they perpetuate the very system they all claim to detest. The Internet offers an unrivalled opportunity for more artists to make their music available to more people without lining the pockets of the industry parasites i.e. free. If, along the way, an artist manages to reach a point where music can become a full-time job, so much the better - so long as the music itself is not compromised. Unfortunately, that's rarely the case.

WORDS> Tom Magic Feet

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concept

dark room
makaton live set (rodz-konez)
uberdog (future funk - bristol)
ed jaques (ealing massive)
glenn mcmahon
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light room
paul gannaway (nest rec's)
tom willis (hip hop)
dakota (hip-funk & beats)
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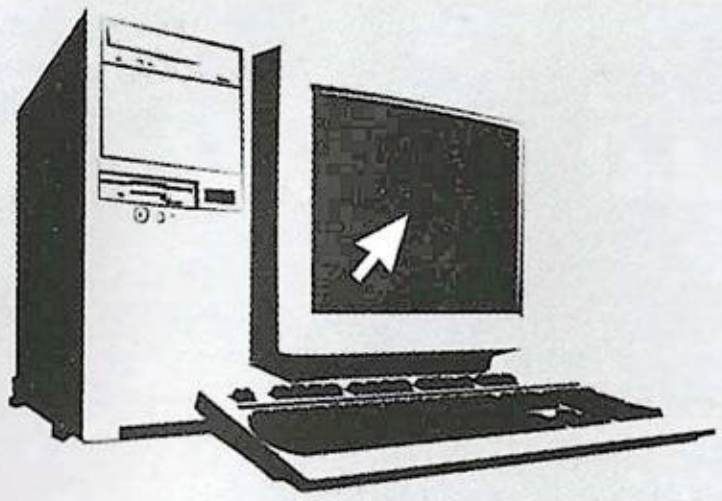

OVERLOAD ONLINE

http://www.overloadmedia.co.uk

New to Overload Online this issue are indepth interviews with ANDREW WEATHERALL and SI BEGG, whilst LOW.LIFE explores the practise of SOUND THERAPY. Shortly to be uploaded into the gallery will be a selection of visual art from GUY DENNING, BOO COOK, ESKIMO PUSH and XENZ. Visual and audio submissions for the site are welcomed (see site for further details), as are your articles, rants and information. There is now a mailing list facility for those wishing to be notified of updates to Overload Online. From Overload Version 8.0 onwards, the site will be uploaded with new record reviews and other content on a weekly basis.

STICKDEATH

http://www.stickdeath.com

Beyond the realms of insipidly slick sites with bubblegum flash animations comes the beautifully twisted world of Stickdeath. The basic idea is animations about Stick-people dying in nasty, hilarious ways. Then comic timing is superb, some of the sound effects are spot-on and the brevity of the animations makes download times pleasantly short (and so viewable at work). It seems as if the graphics have been getting a bit more advanced recently and there is a definite move towards clutter, which is not necessarily a good thing but this is still one of the freshest, funniest sites out there.

IRDIAL

http://www.ibmpcug.co.uk/%7Eirdial/w31.htm
http://www.ibmpcug.co.uk/%7Eirdial/fat_index.htm

Irdial, saviours of cartoon techno and all things esoteric have got two sites packed full of irreverent and interesting content. It's pretty hard to work out where to start, and once you do follow a path you can end up on a mad cruise into manic-information heaven. In fact, it's pretty hard to find anything that's actually to DO with Irdial, but there is info on the back catalogue and where to get those elusive 12"s. But it's the huge mix of content on offer here that is so good. A couple of sites you could spend hours playing with.

TYGOHOME

http://www.tygohome.com

Okay, so most of you should probably know about this, but if you don't then go and check it out now. Written by the most wickedly bitter and twisted people alive on the planet TGH is a scathing attack of all things London and mediocre, a desperate rant against the masses of fashion-victim crap the majority of city people aspire to. It's all done through a mock-up of a TV mag listings and the fictional program titles take Viz to a sort of semi-real state. Updated weekly, this is a site that gets people through their working week sometimes.

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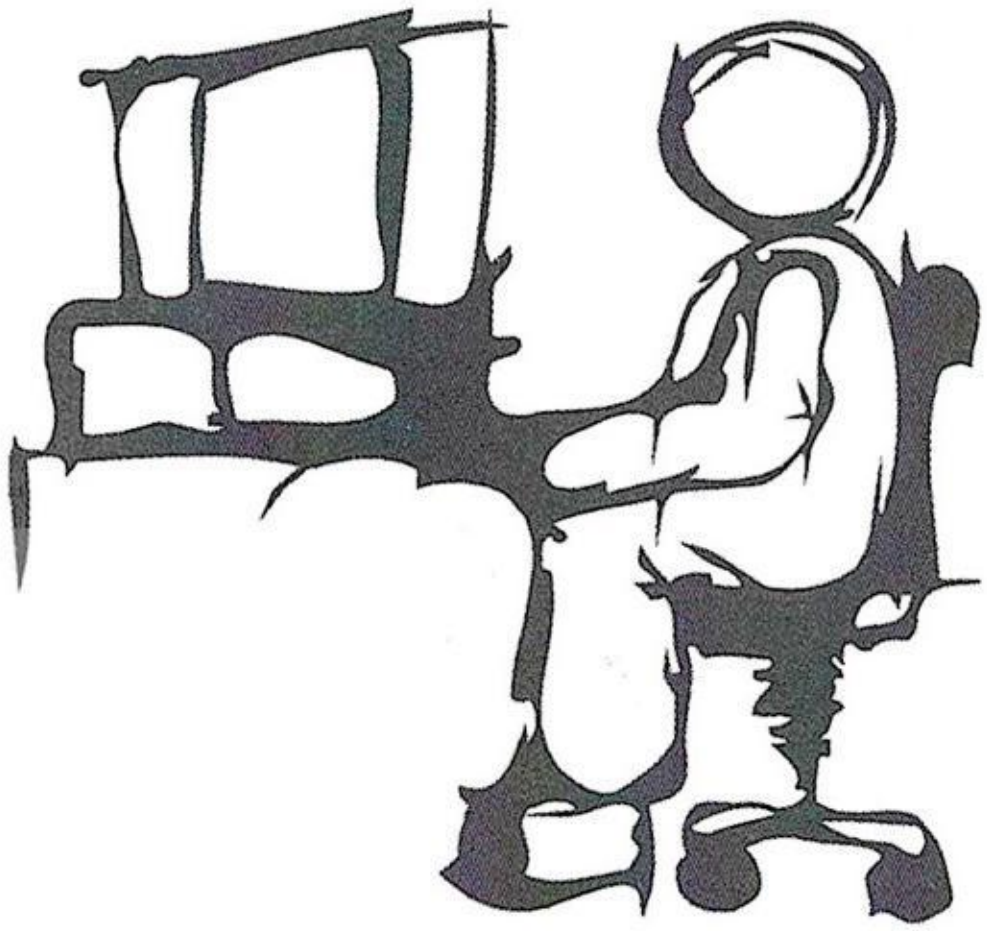
Media sickness



Newspapers have long seen themselves as agents of justice. But as Overload's MATT HENRY discovers, not even the broadsheets know the meaning of the word.

In the UK the News of the World campaign to 'name and sham' sex offenders and the threats of The Sun and The Mirror to expose the identities of the Bulger [child] killers, are part of a long tabloid tradition of witch-hunt justice. But if the track 'em down and burn 'em out approach doesn't float your boat, you don't have to suffer distaste alone. The columns of the more liberal broadsheet papers are chocker with the eager words of fluffy journos ready to share their shock at such barbarism with anyone willing to listen. "Like the mob," says Times columnist Simon Jenkins, "It feels no shame in deploying hysteria, hypocrisy and humbug until someone in authority is brave enough to call it to order."

A noble assertion but don't kid yourself that the 'qualities' do any more for the 'public interest.' To get some kind of real social, economic, environmental and racial justice, the public need knowledge of who is doing what and why. Who, meaning the movers and the shakers, those men and women wielding power enough to shape our lives, be it through politics, pressure groups, the police force or big business. Wrongs can only be righted when exposed and the media should be geared towards maximum exposure of those best equipped to wrong others.

Both the 'good' and 'evil' sides of the mainstream media fall way short of this goal. At least when the tabloids talk of 'monsters', 'psychos' and 'perverts,' it's clear they're living only in the realm of the video-nasty. With even the most right-on of broadsheet papers, it's more difficult to know what you're missing. With that heavy text, those giant pages and not a single advert for crotchless panties, it's easy to think your getting a taste of 'the truth.' Yet, almost 40% of broadsheet stories now originate from the bowels of public relations companies. And the other 60%: mostly from government leaks, civil service reports, parliamentary debates, police briefings and poll results. Talk to any national reporter and they'll tell you they hardly seem to get out and about any more. Reporting is now a case of rehashing information provided by the very institutions and organisations we should be keeping an eye on - albeit with some sort of spin to make for catchy reading.

Real investigative journalism seems to be something now shown only late at night on UK Channel 4. The sort of stuff dug out by Mark Thomas is the sort of stuff newspaper reporters should be out getting 24-7. Where were the broadsheets before BP Amoco's connections with the Columbian military were finally exposed? Where were they when Unilever tried to overturn a human rights law refusing to award public contracts to those doing business with Burma? Where were they when Vodaphone backed road building at the Newbury Bypass and then got permission to build a massive new HQ on greenbelt land beside it? Time after time, it is left to political activists to expose the injustices of the police, politicians and organisations/corporations like the WTO, IMF, World Bank, Nike, Gap, Microsoft and Monsanto. Just as the tabloid focus on crime and celebrity gossip diverts the attention of readers from real issues of justice, so broadsheet failures to pursue real investigative journalism stop readers from thinking anything is possible much beyond the status quo.

Measuring the success of the government institutions that are supposed to serve us is an important function of the media but, in an age where the power of multinational corporations has begun to exceed the power of many national governments, the national press must begin directing its gaze elsewhere. And this means not sitting on arses waiting for the latest report on the failures of the National Health Service, but getting out and digging some serious corporate dirt.

However, there must also be a change in the way news is reported. Stories are so often placed in a political vacuum as if the chain of events were unrelated. The forced eviction of tribal peoples by oil companies, rising oil prices, donations by oil companies to Congressman and the American air strikes in Iraq are presented as separate incidents as if there were no connection. Newsroom culture that lauds the objective and the impartial must take its share of the blame. To draw such conclusions is (shock, horror) to make some sort of judgement, as if the choice of stories or the choice of phrases were not. Objectivity is little but a pipe dream - in failing to make the connection writers are in effect defending the status quo and the sooner editors start to realise this and take some responsibility the better. Until that day, it seems to be up to underground press publications such as Schnews, Squall and the Independent Media Centre, or marginal political magazines like the New Internationalist and Red Pepper, to explore issues thoroughly within their social, economic, environmental and racial contexts.

With that heavy text, those giant pages and not a single advert for crotchless panties, it's easy to think your getting a taste of 'the truth.'

But is the idea of the mainstream media delivering real justice little but a hollow and unworkable fantasy? You only have to look at the barriers to realise this is not the case. The mainstream media is governed ultimately by the free-market. Aside from the extra-journalistic pressures exerted by the vested interests of media barons like Murdoch, journalists also face the depressing fact that increased competition and de-regulation mean an increase in circulation wars. If you don't get the readers, you don't get your pay cheque. As the ante ups, so do the time pressures and the need to bow to the whims of advertisers - who is really going to go out and dig dirt when copy is coming in from all angles. Add to this British libel law that strongly favours big business and you can see why investigative journalism has become just another genre of journalism rather than the very modus operandi of newsrooms that it once was.

A press complaints commission with teeth, reformation of libel laws and a willingness of journalists to listen to media academics are perhaps the only ways we can stop the so-called 'qualities' slipping further into the quagmire of entertainment. The sad fact is that should this happen, its effects will go largely unreported - people without voices cannot cry for help.

WORDS> Matt Henry

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EVENTS:
HOMELANDS
RESOLUTION
DEDBEAT

PEOPLE POWER?

Public, peaceful protest is one of the most powerful ways of drawing media attention to a cause. From the Greenham Peace Women to the students in Tianmen Square, when the people took their grievance to the streets, the media has taken it to the world at large. But what happens when the negative publicity generated for the activists is greater than the exposure they seek for their cause?

The reason for all public demonstration is to influence others' opinion by spreading your own. Favourable media coverage is therefore key to any successful protest. Campaigners for gay and womens rights chose the Grammys as the backdrop for their demonstration about the allegedly homophobic and misogynist content of award winner Eminem's lyrics. The press pounced and the protest was reported in every national UK paper. However, reports in the online and magazine music press noted that his songs also contained pejorative references to the police, sundry authority figures, pensioners, teachers, friends, his family and even himself. The coverage not only highlighted the protesters' argument as ill-considered, it also did little to damage Eminem's reputation as a misunderstood bad boy. If you can hear a ringing in your ears, it's the tills at HMV.

Cute signs and big crowds no longer cut it for a press gorged on soundbites; as the Grammy protesters found out, a reporter no longer prints the views of the picket verbatim. A newsworthy protest needs spin. Beyond a flawed argument, the biggest obstacle to objective portrayal is the protesters themselves. Take the World Trade Organisation demos in Seattle; column inches devoted to the appearance of the protesters exceeded those considering their arguments and opinions.

Human beings are tribal, be it geographical or sartorial. If we can't ignore tailoring preferences, imagine the barrier imposed by philosophical differences? Fear sells more copies than fact, and "city swamped in sea of anarchy" shifts more than "protest leader calls for trade reforms". Perceived threat is also greater when faced with an anonymous crowd - during the M27 protests, all media coverage was hostile until an accidental spokesperson stepped forward in the shape of Swampy. Although this "personalisation" of the protest led the Conservative press to re-examine the M27 activists' argument more favourably, it is a moot point whether tabloid fixation upon this individual's hair and lifestyle detracted from the issue-focused coverage the protest might otherwise have received.

Sometimes, the organization of the protest itself lends the papers an "us and them" angle for reporting. During the anti-capitalist demos of 1999, broadsheet newspapers sympathetic to the cause commented on the sinister edge that the lack of public figurehead gave the events.

The Criminal Justice Act in the UK also sounded the death knell for co-operation with local authorities when planning demonstrations. The 10,000 J18 activists who brought London's financial mile to a standstill two years ago used the internet to secretly spread assembly details. But outwitting the Metropolitan police so successfully is a bitter victory, illustrated by the 14,500 officers on duty and stand-by for the May Day 2000 protests. The forces of law and order do not react favourably to proof of incompetence.

A crude media measurement of a protest's significance has always been bums on streets, or size. Many different environmental and human interest groups joined forces for the J18 demonstrations, but rather than strengthening the message, they rather rendered it incoherent. As some spoke to the press about trade reforms and consumer awareness, others spoke of "smashing ... doors [of City banking buildings], invading property, burning effigies..., crashing accounting systems." * the message turns into a mess.

So is all public gesture doomed to misinterpretation? No. The reason we protest publicly is to influence others' opinion by spreading our own. But Information doesn't always equal demonstration; and success doesn't have to be measured in thousands, as James Mawdsley illustrated during his campaign for human rights in Burma. Briefly, Mawdsley was imprisoned in Burma for 17 years for handing out leaflets that were critical of the country's brutal military regime. Compared to today's headline-grabbing activists, this pedestrian protest would have garnered little coverage, were it not for the following reasons.

Firstly, although one could disagree with his opinion, the argument for his behaviour stood up to media scrutiny. That Karen, Shan and Karenni were being tortured and massacred, and he felt this was wrong.

So what spin to put on the story? Potential leftie lunatic Mawdsley was, disappointingly, a university-educated 27 year-old whose parents had worked for the British army. With the "us and them" angle seemingly redundant, the Burmese regime became "them" and James, in his ethical protest, represented "us" in the broadsheets.

Although Burmese human rights organisations exist, Mawdsley's lack of explicit affiliation to anything but his opinion kept his message clear and his position unthreatening. He was also aware of his position as unofficial figurehead for the Burmese rights movement in this country, and considered the impact of his words and actions carefully. 21 articles covering his protest appeared in the Guardian alone during the 14 months that he was imprisoned, and this publicity gave pressure groups in the rest of the world the leverage to voice their concerns in the wider press. As he said after his early release in 2000, "it was a risk, but it was a calculated risk. It paid off" **

But if the mob no longer gets results and the headlines come at considerable personal sacrifice, what for the future of public protest? Luckily, Kalle Lasn of Adbusters has it covered. Adbusters, the organisation and bi-monthly magazine, takes corporate consumer culture on using its own tools; the subvertisement. Subverts produced by Adbusters (slick and provocative parodies of advertisements for such consumer giants as Coke, Nike, McDonalds) takes the revolution directly to our armchairs.

Read by 100,000 internationally, Adbusters magazine does not issue a code for living. Instead, through articles and artwork, it seeks to provoke thought and discussion among its readership at grass roots level about the ethics and sanity of a society obsessed with consumerism. As such, the magazine is an excellent reference material for the Adbusters story, contact details or "culture jamming" activities round the world. The crisp and well-indexed website illustrates the serious intent behind the Hilfiger pastiches; Lasn wants the information to be an accessible resource to anyone drawn in by the clever juxtaposition of consumer dream and civil reality.

Public protest isn't dead; it's very much alive. But the methods for manipulating the media have moved on. It used to be that people said, "it's not what you say, it's what you do." Now it's both.

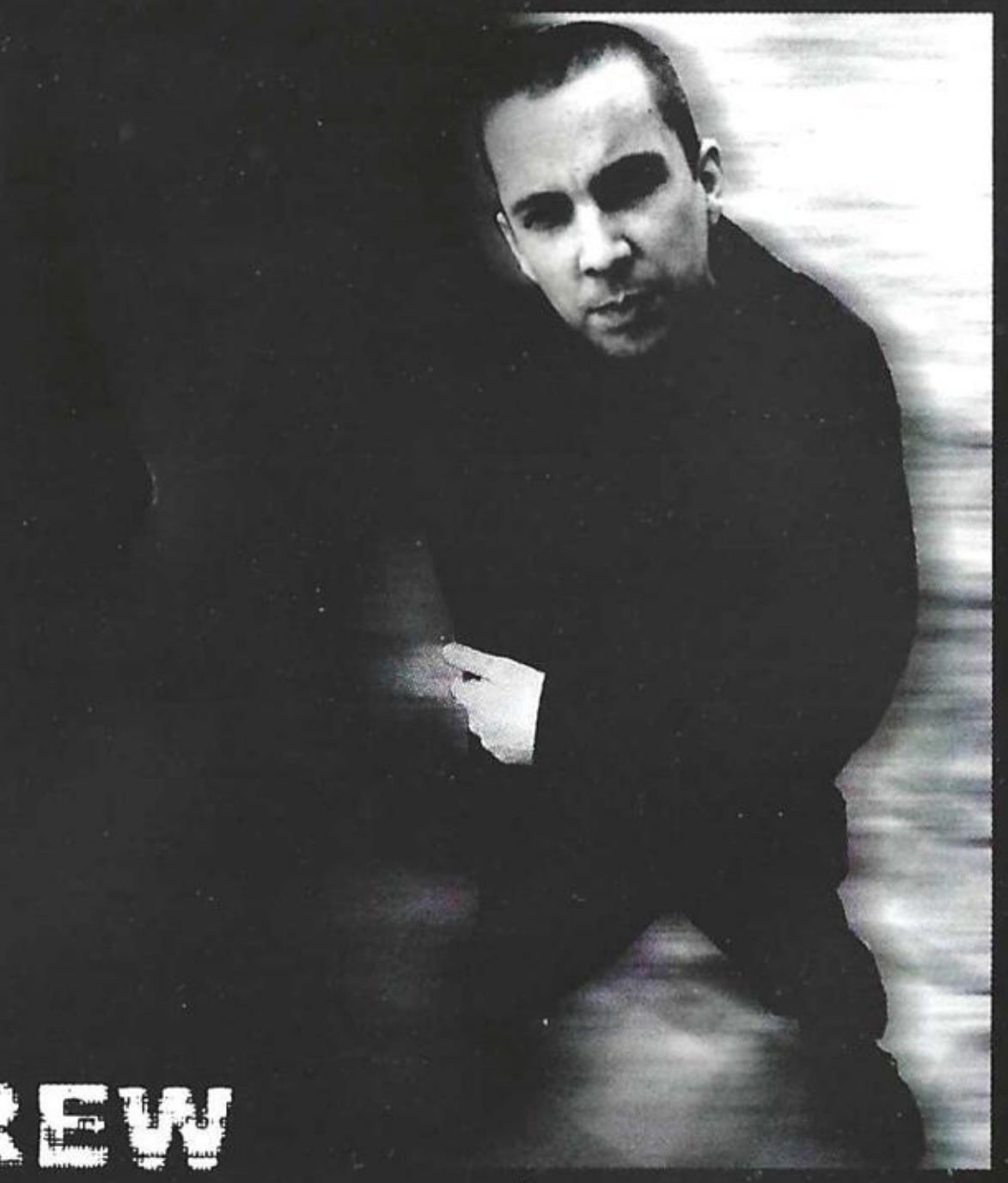
*The Observer, 31.10.99 ** The Guardian 03.11.00

WORDS> Isabel Hopwood

With his Two Lone Swordsmen project continuing apace and a new label mission standing by for launch, venerable veteran and respectable rotter ANDREW WEATHERALL talks to Overload about Zen, electro and the upside of guitars and dance music.

From a journalist's viewpoint, there's no doubt Andrew Weatherall is always good for a bit of the old 'rent-a-quote'. Ever-opinionated yet eloquently outspoken, he's been crowned with many titles during his well-documented decade of decadence and deliverance; the prolific pop producer, the dominant underground DJ, the label boss, club runner, notorious caner, optimistic cynic... So, as I pull up a chair with a remarkably sprightly and clean-shaven Mr. Weatherall, I'm all too aware there's enough ground waiting to be trodden to make my rushed interview preparations appear plentiful. This is a man who has spent over a decade embedded in the consciousness of the rave generation, and one-word answers it seems, aren't a viable option.

However one perceives his precarious passage through the annals of Nineties' pop, Andrew Weatherall's role as a catalyst for crossover permeates more extensively than the majority of his contemporaries.



ANDREW WEATHERALL

His reworking of Primal Scream's tormented ballad 'I'm Losing More Than I'll Ever Have' into the cult smash 'Loaded' was a powerful mechanism that shifted guitars and 'beats' into a shared melting pot. By the time he'd produced the band's 'Screamadelica' LP in 1991, the twenty-something Londoner had played a pivotal part in changing the face of popular music, for better or for worse, forever. "I'm one of a few people who should be in the dock for that" he declares. "'Never apologise, never explain' springs to mind - I seem to spend my life in interviews doing both. I think it's not the records I don't like, it's more me ten years ago that I don't like..."

He's the first to admit there are moments from his past, production or otherwise, that have been "a bit sketchy." But whilst previous incarnations in the press have portrayed him as an idle and petulant pioneer, in the Weatherall camp of recent years there's no sign of fuelling negativity with remorse, but instead a push to learn from past faux pas. "Yeah, that's what keeps you going" he remarks, viewing self-appraisal as fundamental to progression. "There's a lot of people out there who aren't as good as the press are saying they are, but they're lapping it up, they're believing it and they're not questioning themselves." Having received plenty of both acclaim and criticism over the years, it's unsurprising he treats the increasingly fickle world of published wordplay with decidedly less gravity than when he was propelled unsuspectingly into the glare of publicity some twelve years ago. "It's totally reciprocal" he comments, "At the moment Two Lone Swordsmen are flavour of the month. In a certain publication that recently said we had the best electronic music album of the year our last review said that I should be driving a cab."

Given his production panoramic since the heady daze of the early Nineties, where notions of an Emperor's New Clothes scenario once loomed ominously above his headphones, there's little evidence to detest the integrity of his passions for DJing and production. "Okay, some people just thought I was a bit of a chancer, but a few other people could see the love of music coming through," he recounts confessing that, in his early days of playing at clubs like Danny Rampling's Shoom, "enthusiasm probably over-rode the lack of technical ability." Whilst keen to cover all bases when playing out (something he does more capably than most), he sounds uncomfortable when I dub him a 'jack-of-all-trades.' "The thing is with the phrase jack-of-all-trades you know what comes next - master of none," he replies. "I think it's a polite way of calling them a dilettante, someone who is doing it as a bit of a hobby, flying around doing this that and the other. I think five years ago and past, then I did fall into that category, but now I think I don't spread myself as thinly as I did before. So yeah, I'd say I was a jack of a few trades and reasonably good at the ones I do."

Following the success of his initial chart-bound ventures Weatherall collaborated with Gary Burns and Jagz Kooner to form the seminal studio/band outfit Sabres Of Paradise. As a nation took to their dark experimental sound, he avoided temptation to travel down the path of imminent popularity and silenced the project following their second album release. "I just saw the way that whole thing was going, I was getting further and further away from what I was about because I was propelled down that path," he explains. When the plug was pulled, together with former Sabres engineer Keith Tenniswood he fashioned Two Lone Swordsmen. The project marked something of a turning point: "not just for the whole mechanics of making music, me as a person was beginning to change." He's the first to admit how for many years music was primarily a soundtrack to hedonism. "It was five or six years of absolute lunacy. I wouldn't swap it for the world, but around the time when we started Two Lone Swordsman things were beginning to change. The hedonism needed to be kept in check a bit because there was a danger of becoming a bit of a cartoon character, a bit of self parody, and I knew I should really be concentrating on the music."

Following the demise of Sabres, in keeping with his multi-faceted spinning style Andrew established Emissions Audio Output, a three-tiered label maintaining a varied release roster right up until it's recent interment. "Yeah, varied in quality as well" he adds with a wry smile. "There are some things we shouldn't have put out and there are some things we didn't put out which we should have done, but every record label's going to tell you that. People were sending all these great demos that were never going to see the light of day anywhere else."

In Two Lone Swordsmen the duo soon forged an intoxicating new sound through their tight studio partnership, releasing on Emissions before signing to Warp, one of Andrew's favourite (and former) labels.

From aquatic dub house to menacing electro twist-ups, today's TLS material wears plenty of influences on its sleeve but drops a whole load of interference into the transmission. "Yeah you can spot the influences, but not in the way that I know what record that's sampled from or I know where they've nicked that bassline from. I think when you listen to our stuff, especially now, it's infused with influences yet it doesn't pillage the past for our own gain. I think we diffuse our influences well."

One influence that's shined through in both his DJing and recorded output during recent years is electro. "That's always been there," he explains. "My early club experiences were electro tinged, my all-time favourite single was Joyce Simms 'All And All' which was a Mantronix production. Its one of those musical influences that has always been in the brain, but over the last four or five years it's finally worked its way to the fingertips. I've liked it because to me its kind of the rawest form of machine music - when done properly you can hear the machines humming. It goes back to a love of early drum machines on records in the 60's and 70's, just that rudimentary, almost 808 sounding preset rhythm boxes that people started to use. With electro you can keep the pace of a set going but change the rhythm, which is what I like to do when I'm playing. I didn't like 100% thud thud thud, I like a bit of thud, snare, thud, snare every now and again."

"I think that the underground can be a bit of a cosy place to hide... a lot of people seem to be a bit too happy moaning about 'commerciality' because they don't actually have to prove themselves."

In light of past monumental decisions, Two Lone Swordsmen certainly aspires to greater longevity than his previous projects. "I think it'll run and run" Andrew assures. "But the good thing is we're not stuck with that, we don't have to be Two Lone Swordsmen 24-hours a day. Two Lone Swordsmen pays the bills and pays for other less obvious musical excursions, so I don't think it's something that I'll stop." Such digressions include the new RGC (Rotter's Golf Club) label, a new 7" label project christened The Hidden Library, a track on Mille Plateaux's highly experimental 'Clicks And Cuts Vol.2', and forthcoming releases on distinguished continentals Kanzleramt and Force Inc.

Returning to his philosophy of stopping before things peter out, I wonder if this in anyway correlates to why his more recent compositions are short in comparison to much of his archives? "Because I'd been thrown into the limelight I thought every time I appeared I had to make this massive grand gesture. And to me grand gestures were 15-minute tracks, all guns blazing, 'where's the kitchen sink? we'll have that in…' Then suddenly realised that loads of the records I love are two and a half minutes, three chords. I just learnt that you can say so much more by saying so much less. And then I read a definition of Zen, which is 'the maximum amount of beauty and the minimum amount of ingredients.' It was there in black and white."

Although the thought of guitars and 'beats' doesn't float his boat these days, he tenders constructive commentary on the current state of the field he so guilelessly helped fertilise. "The good thing about it is, is that if you listened to indie 10 or 15 years ago you wouldn't get to hear about great funk records or great Latin records or great jazz records, but at least now if you're an indie kid or you listen to big beat, they're sampling old funk records. So it would be foolish to totally decry big beat or indie dance because I think it does serve a valuable purpose in leading people to other areas." Indeed, his dissatisfaction with that whole 'school' of music seems to lie in the fact that much 'indie dance' is primarily lazy in its construction. "A lot of it just sounds more like an exercise in sampling - there's no thought of dynamics or actual sonics" he comments. "I don't mind functional music but that seems a bit too functional sometimes, which is why it's used as background music for sports programs - it's tailor made for it."

Or adverts. Isn't a version of the Sabres' awesome 'Smokebelch' currently being used on an ad for Vodaphone? I ask. "Don't get me started on that one," he answers, a touch defensively. "Basically, I've had the piss taken out of me by a very large multi-national who know that I can't afford to sue them. To be honest I got a couple of grand out of it that's it for a fucking advert that's out everywhere. But the good thing was I channeled all the anger into making music and made some really great tunes, because it was like 'I'm going to make a tune that no bastard can put in an advert'. The most annoying thing about it is people coming up to you and saying 'get the drinks in, you must have a million in the bank'. Well, I had two grand and I probably spent that on rent for the studio."

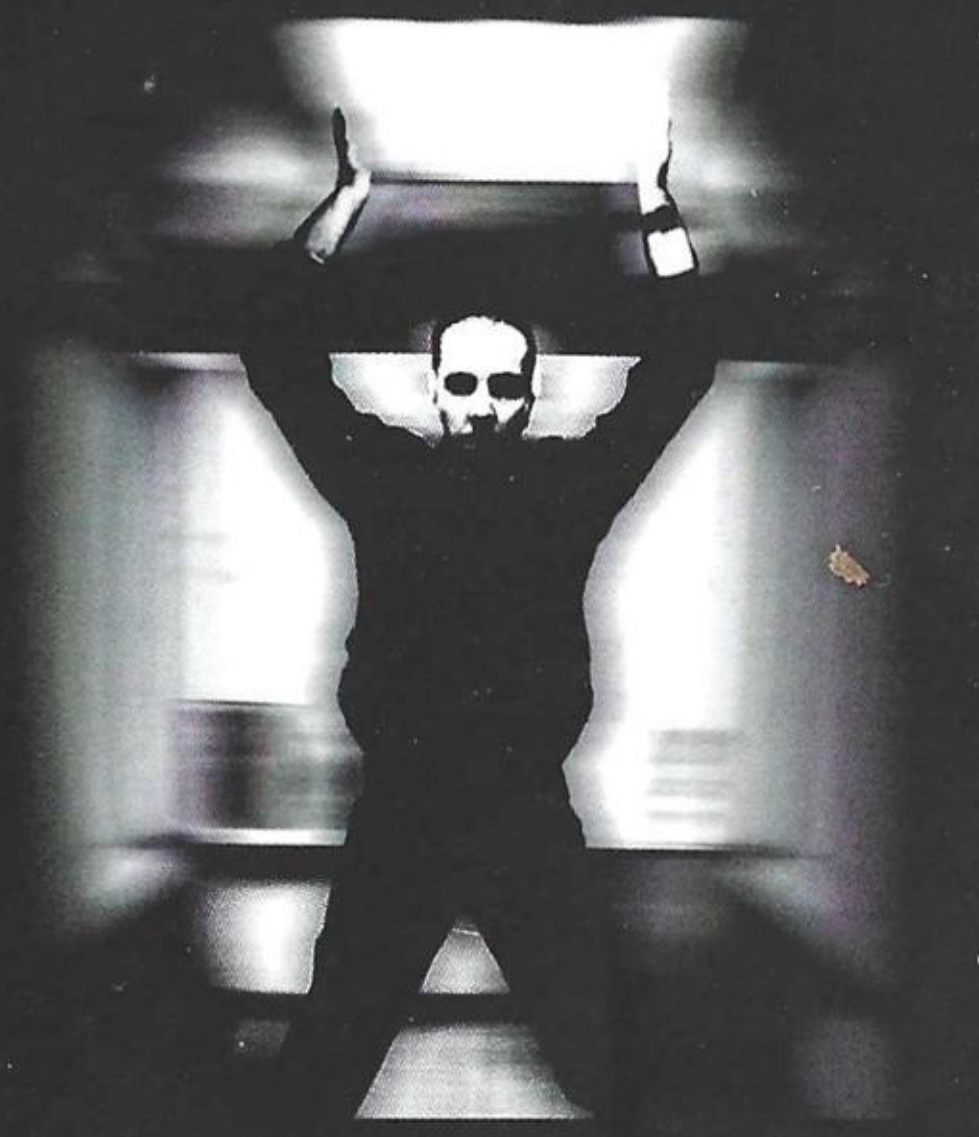
Having trodden the path between the underground and the mainstream with boots bigger than most, he's critical of those who lie submerged beneath the surface of self-exposure only to wallow in self-styled credibility. "I think that the underground can be a bit of a cosy place to hide," he states. "It can get a bit ghettoized. Okay, moan about the 'overground', moan about 'commerciality', but a lot of people seem to be a bit *too* happy moaning about it because they don't actually have to prove themselves, go above ground and do any fighting. It's like the generals at the back, 'off to the front with you'. It's like 'come on lads lets get up out the manhole cover and walk about amongst these people', because you can have fun with it as well. The pop world and the commercial world are very funny. It can be annoying that there are a lot of very silly people making a large amount of money, but if you're doing something experimental or vaguely different I think you've got to resign yourself to the fact that it's not going to make you a millionaire. You're not doing it for that anyway - you moan about commerciality, but then you tell everyone you're doing it for the love of it? Well stop moaning about not having any money then!"

At the end of the day it's obvious Andrew Weatherall is opposed to the inverted snobbery that belies the 'open-minded' attitude most 'underground' producers profess to endorse. "All the people who decry the mass media or decry pop culture will gladly go into ironic mode when the 80's get mentioned. If they'd had been students at the time of the Human League then they would have gone, 'this is shit'. All the people now who are slagging off pop music, their younger brothers in ten years time will be looking back at these records as classic pop records and will be dancing about to it in an ironic way with mullet hairdos. Why not enjoy the pop culture now rather than just ironically in 10 years time? Isn't it good that certain radio one DJ's are just Smashy and Nicey with Prada shirts, it's funny! A lot of the popular dance press is beyond self-parody, you don't need to set up a fanzine to take the piss out of it, just go and buy it! It's equally as funny - why not get off on it?"

A hackneyed cynic then, or perhaps not… "There's nothing wrong with being cynical as long as you use the energy of that cynicism to do something about the situation" he concludes. "I'm very guilty of not doing stuff in the past, the first 25 years of my life was just spent moaning!"

And on a high I propose we draw the interview to a close. "Well, that would be in character," comes a cheeky chuckle.

For the full Overload interview with Andrew Weatherall visit www.overloadmedia.co.uk



WORDS> Alex Ward

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WELCOME to the new music release section of Overload. Thanks to everyone who has submitted material for review in version 7.0 - sorry we couldn't fit everything in. Please send new material for review to:

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Please note, the opinions expressed here are those of individual reviewers and not ncessarily those of Overload Magazine.

Releases are listed alphabetically by label.

SINGLES

ADE FENTON 'Boomer' (Advanced)
The eleventh release on his own label brings forth two new tracks from Atomic Jam's main man Ade Fenton. Nothing particularly new, and I'm a bit disappointed there's only two tracks, but the production is as tight as ever and both are very typical 'Fenton' releases - tough, punchy, percussive workouts that will work well on today's loop friendly dancefloors. **M**

G FLAME 'Demand EP' (Alpha)
More shifty shuffin' house music from Cisco Ferreira's alter ego, keeping the standard high for his NYC-based imprint. A1 and B1 are both carefully crafted DJ tools with plenty of bass-driven bounce whilst A2 settles into a more twisted chunky vibe for toe tappin' and head noddin' delight. **VS**

MAX DULEY 'Speech Emphasis' (Arc(ane))
A pleasing palette of oddities, with four tracks taking very different slants on abstract techno. On the A-side 'Got To Get Down Again' rattles and swings like playground samba, whilst my personal favourite 'Mapped' kicks out some sprightly minimalism with twisted tonal interplay. Turn over, and 'Overcome' displays some good elements but lacks any real drive, leaving the darker Detroit-esque 'Electric Orange' to deal with the dancefloor. **DJ**

V/A 'Mute Embrace' (Arc(ane))
Strong reworkings of previous (Arc(ane)) material from three of techno's less well-known talents. New York's Mike Parker turns in a trademark slice of spacious sound therapy, breaking down midway though into a very heady tonal section. On the flip Hardcell's Nils Danielsson and Japan's Takaaki Otoh kick out the minimal club grooves in their own inimitable styles, Danielsson's mix having the edge with it's menacing midrange and highly effective dropouts. A very capable collection. **DG**

MIKE WADE 'T.B.C.' (Archetype ARCH04)
Floor-filling frenetics from one of Chicago's current techno cream. It's all very pacey stuff, bursting with bass and cut up vocals in a vibrant production style, but B2's the obvious highlight - an uncompromising jack track that'll whip floors into a whooping frenzy with its incessant claps and crazed bottom end. **DJ**

JACKSTAR 80 'Talking in Tongues EP' (Audio Textures)
Four tracks of jacking beats and twisted analogue FX from London producer Paul Langley. Think relentless kickdrums and plenty of frequency abuse and you get the picture. A2 is probably best with an infectious little hook and shouts of 'Ghettokid'. Marching music for militants. **MH**

JEFF MILLIGAN 'Algorithm EP' (Background)
Toronto-based Revolver Records man, Milligan, makes his debut for Background here, and does so impressively. His musical agenda fits in well with the label's ongoing quest to showcase the best in minimal electronics, and this 12" highlights three differing takes on the theme. Featuring deep chords and clever use of two-step momentum, a funky 4/4 high-end clicker, and the Mille Plateau-like pops of B2, 'Algorithm' has something for both the dancefloor and armchair. **NC**

DOLE & KOM 'The Sound Of Berlin' (BCC)
Heralding the imminent onset of Spring the Berlin house sound of Dole and Kom present three tracks of feelgood disco house. The title track is a Studio 54-style string melody number with sultry whispered vocals welcoming you to the disco, whilst 'Excuse Me' marries a funky-as-fuck bassline and dreamy guitar melody. The flip (A) side features a more run-of-the-mill strumming and horns-type of track - the kind of thing coming out of Chicago by the bucket load. Still, this one is up there with the best of them and sure shows those boys across the water that you didn't need to be there to feel it in your soul. **AG**

SCAPE ONE 'Dangerous Frontiers' (Binary Types)
Five distinctly old school flavoured slabs of lino tearing electro on UK label Binary Frontiers from the south coast's Scape One. The awesome DMX-sounding 'Don't Stop, Let Your Body Rock' is the track that really makes this worth searching out - an assured crowd-pleaser. The other four tracks take a more abstract Kraftwerk- inspired direction, like soundtracks to a future of showroom dummies and self automated machines. **M**

NICO AWTSVENTIN 'Axiom EP' (Bio)
The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed that this artist's odd name is an anagram of well-known house and techno producer, Vincent Watson. His talents are illustrated on the A-side as lush, textured chords give this track a depth and quality others struggle to emulate. Both tracks on the flip also possess a finesse and subtlety that is often missing in club techno these days, although the main track is the one. **MH**

LAUT 29 'Vermachtnis Der Elfen' (Black Love Records)
According to the press this is 'the sound of 21st century elfs', although if that's the same thing as elves I can't be sure. What is certain is that they make quite beautiful and contrasting music and take things at a very sedate pace. The A-side is a deceptively simple stretch of bass arpeggio-led minimalism with soft strings and sparse but precise percussion, while the B-side is a more upbeat and erratic mix of breaks and drifting three note arpeggio that joins a timed bass part. All very straightforward stuff but meticulously executed to produce two highly listenable tracks. **AG**

DANNY CASSEAU vs DJ CHICH 'Indiram EP' (Blackpitchmusic)
Luxembourg loop troopers Danny Casseau & DJ Chich launch their new label with two tearing techno assaults for mashing the crowd into a pulp, plus one more experimental rhythmic excursion. The EP has a very continental sound, and whilst there's little here to make it stand out from the pack, the sturdy percussive builder of 'Bassman' is sure to see spin-time in European clubs. **DJ**

DYLAN 'Muji' (Blue Black)
Smooth, good times tech-funk on a tribal tip for this release from the Blue Black imprint. 'Muji' opens things up with a funky sub-bass groove, crisp patter percussion and an indecipherable but infectious vocal stab. 'Illinois' takes things into deeper territory with a lazy Juno bassline and backward synth wipes and then heads towards classic tech-house territory with echoed Detroit synth stabs and FX. Cool grooves and quality production, but little that sticks in the memory once the needle has left the plastic. **AG**

ANDREI MORANT 'Logan Square EP' (Blueline)
On his debut release for this label, we see a more considered approach from Andrei Morant, encompassing a whole lot more Chicago soul. Still an EP of dancefloor devastation but rhythms are given more time to evolve and the urge to build in intensity is resisted. Tracks vary from the shakin' bass and vocal stabs of 'Turndown' to the ultra slow echoed beats of 'Thunder Wookie' and an excellent collaboration with Tim Xavier featuring an uptempo house beats'n'bass combo with filtered chiming synths and a degree of cool previously unseen in this producer. Three useful tracks with cross genre appeal, and new heights for an already accomplished artist. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
FRANKIE BONES 'Filthy Dirty Animal Crackers' (Blueline)
Composed amid an atmosphere of flooding, killer mosquitoes and water poisoning in New York City, Bones has approached his first release for Blueline with gritty intent. Four tracks of ghetto funk rhythms peppered with vocal snippets and harsh machine noise but with a precision usually associated with European techno styles. 'Workin' captures the oppression of a mega metropolis with it's constipated growls and distorted snares, while on 'I Can't Control It' and 'Blast Off' he manages to blend a nonchalant coolness with the oppressive urban atmosphere. Possibly one of his best releases to date, and with 15 years in the business that's really saying something. **AG**

SMASH TV 'Electronic Boy' (Bpitch Control)
Cheap scuzzy electro - the best kind really. At parties where there's techno in one room and electro in the other, the electro room usually has the proper party vibe going on and all four tracks here would go down a storm - with crunchy release-heavy analog bass and mellow robotik vocal tricks beavering away over tuff Roland drum action. Not classic by any standards, but for all you deejays, why not? - it's only £5 innit, or thereabouts. **EB**

GRENADE 'Performance Modes' (Cadeaux)
Paul Kalkbrenner must have forgotten to pull the pin because this release is less explosive than the editors arse *[Not sure if that's a compliment or not..?! Ed)*. The A-side sounds like Hardfloor's 'Acperience' attempted on a Casio home keyboard while the flip explains the EP's title by making full use of the 'chord follow' feature on said machine to deliver a dull as dishwater abomination. Should get out more. **AG**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

HOLGER FLINSCH 'Der Zehnte Juli' (Choke)
This double pack LP features eight tracks of minimal techno and house ranging from ambient moods to club destined pounders. Almost without exception they fall into the formula of laying down a groove and embellishing it with dreamy strings and pads - although it's done with great taste and a few of the tracks like the pounding 'Nachtsicht' are well worth and a listen. Much of the rest of it, however, is rather derivative making for an expensive purchase for the few tracks really worth playing. **AG**

CIRCULATION 'Crimson' (Circulation)
You're standing there in a large club at the edge of the dancefloor, shrugging away as the DJ fails to work out what it is the night really calls for. And then from out of nowhere s/he pulls out this gem that's the musical equivalent of turning the central heating up a bit. A bit of a treat. Well that could be one of these tunes, good simple house music equally suited to home or club listening, or for playing on public address systems. **EB**

CIRCULATION 'Magenta' (Circulation)
This series of colours will be well known to many people and this latest review probably won't change any minds. You either like them or you don't and this is not a departure from the traditional formula. 'Magenta' is an immediately striking tune but one I imagine will ultimately lack longevity. Solid and reliable tech house which DJ's will love, though erring towards the trance side of things and not as deep or as subtle as other tracks around. A sturdy club tune that'll probably get hammered, despite lacking sophistication, complemented here by a nice, slower B-side. **MH**

>RECOMMENDED<
HIROAKI IIZUKA 'Haze EP' (Coda)
Deftly produced dark club rhythms from yet another prolific Japanese talent, fabricating the fourth and most playable release on James Ruskin's Coda series. Reminiscent texturally of Oliver Ho's deeper material but with added rhythmic energy this is forceful driving tackle that's bound to see stacks of manipulation from discerning loop lovers of the Lost variety. **VS**

SEEKER 'Manifestation' (Continual)
More deep shifting minimalism on Rob Alcock's London-based label, this time from an unknown artist. The tracks on the B-side are engaging enough to pleasure my presently skunk-addled mind, but too lacklustre to pleasure an active dancefloor. If you dig your textured minimal club tracks however, the A-side provides a minor epic of twisted machine movement, cleanly sculpted yet dark and jarring. **DJ**

IAN VOID 'Restraint' (Contrast)
Sticking rigidly to Contrast's driving techno agenda, South Coast stalwart Ian Void takes time out from his Gueshky commitments to forge an effective and well-produced three-tracker. The title track is a dark slab of pressurised percussive action underpinned by unsettling tones and incessant bass. On the flip 'Intent' adopts a more upfront Euro swing whilst 'Clean and Jerk' grows unhurriedly from sparse looped tackle into a peak-time workout. **DJ**

DEAN COLE 'Discipline' (Corrosion)
Carrying on from the dark dancefloor onslaught of Corrosion 06, Birmingham's Dean Cole engineers another two slabs of harsh techno that evolve with plenty of momentum. The A track builds angrily from stripped-down beginnings into a real tearer, whilst flip features a dense percussive tool together with a deeper rhythmic sound bite that ends in a lock. Fine for the style. **FJ**

ATT 'Warrior Groove' (Creative)
The Anti-Trance Terrorists (Paul Davis and Justin Drake) return with more stripped-down tech-funk grooves for your delectation. The title track is built around a Moroder disco style bass-line and builds subtly with house synths and crisp, precise drum programming but avoids the 'no-return' trap of getting too climatic. 'Glyde' on the B-side sticks to similar territory with a squeaky synth riff wriggling it's way into your consciousness and refusing to leave. This time there's much more background jiggery pokery but never so much as to detract from the basic elements. Both tracks make economical use of sounds and use what they have to fine effect. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
THE PRODUCERS 'Rollin" (Creative)
Swingin' deep house 'n techno three-tracker from some people well versed in the art. When the bassline kicks in on 'Rollin' you know you've the attention of the floor - and there's plenty going on to keep them there. On the flip 'Smoothie' takes a much more subdued journey with warm pads and strings for company whilst 'Fused' builds from sparse beginnings into a very rhythmic techy number. Check. **DJ**

PAUL MAC 'C-Sides Vol.3' (C-Sides)
Four straight up club workouts from one of the most prolific producers of recent years. Ideal for mixing with, these tracks are essentially DJ tools, and in the right hands could be serious peak time material. Although they can easily be labelled derivative, they are far better than most and would appeal to fans of Space DJz or the Advent's stuff. All four will probably gain heavy rotation on dancefloors such as Lost. MH

JAQUES LUEDER 'Tactic / Unrest' (Cutting Pleasure)
First release on a new techno label out of Sweden, with two tracks of twisted machine funk forged in a disorientating production style. 'Tactic' builds menacingly into a jarring groove with an intense midrange, whilst 'Unrest' is ultra deep twister of a tune with some very intense moments and a good sense of progression. Definitely a label to keep your eye on I reckon. **DJ**

ELLERY COWLES 'Kabogie EP' (Dafunk Records)
Label boss Mfon calls in Chicago producer Ellery Cowles to give us what he, so poignantly, calls 'Technohousediscofunk'. Not a bad description for music that can only really be described as Technohousediscofunk. A genre I'm kinda partial to, actually. Cowles does a lot right with paranoid vocal melodies chasing phased atmospherics but the drums are just a bit too uninspiring. Good atmosphere but sort yer drums out mate. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
MARK WILLIAMS 'Roots EP' (Dark House Music)
The man behind Acorn Arts comes up trumps again with a four-tracker ranging from deep rhythmic house cuts to storming tribal techno. The highlight of the release is the title track that lays sumptuous reggae horns over a lush percussive groove, dropping out to some madcap flanger action in the breaks. Frankly, the rest of it you could probably take or leave but definitely worth the purchase for the one track alone. **AG**

TONY JACKSON 'Passport EP' (Deep Night Essentials)
Tony Jackson seems at home on this label, considering it's name. 'Passport"s as four to the floor as you like, with some especially deep grooves and classy production touches. 'Departure Detroit Metro' rattles along at breakneck pace, in a Hoody sort of way, whilst the momentum of 'Arrival Dus' is more stomping, with a wicked flammed hat. On the flip, 'Departure Dus' makes good use of a simple hook, and 'Arrival Detroit Metro' goes all out with a piano riff. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
MR G 'Get It Got It Good EP' (Defected)
Given his recent output it's no real surprise to see Colin McBean releasing on a fat cat like Ministry Of Sound favourite Defected. The 'Get It Got It Good' EP represents some of his best work to date and is an absolute must for anyone who likes tough, tracky and driving house with a deep soulful edge. This six-track doublepack blazes through shades of reggae, Chi-town house and club techno, achieving a tremendous sense of flow through dexterous live mix-downs. Standouts are the new mixes of the previously released 'Lightz', although both platters are packed to the hilt with McBean trademarks such as swingin' hi-hats, fat dubby basslines and atmospheric filter sweeps. A true master in the art of sexy percussive party music. **VS**

ELECTRIC ENVOY 'Night-Shift EP' (Definition)
Known to the techno fraternity by their Basic Implant guise, and more recently for work under their own name on Rotation and Toneman, Sven Dedek and Alex Bau take to a newish German label with two dark club atmospherics. Both tracks are very long and will settle people into a gloomy kind of groove. **FJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
JOHN TEJADA 'Genetical Love Remixes' (deFocus)
Focus just carry on doin' it with a sublime EP of lush hip-hop. Tejada turns in the title track from his 'The Matrix Of Us' album (which wasn't included on it...I dunno), and it's a sweetly spooky stepper - Divine Styler's Detroit-style rapping with Carmen Tejada's opera vocals works pretty good. CiM' s two remixes display the usual panache and rich funk he's known for but bring the beats down a bit. Steve Stasis under his Skye moniker turns the hip-hop knob up to 10 with a lush lo-fi old-skool track, and there's even an instrumental version for all you aspiring rappers. Bargain! **EB**

OPTIC NERVE 'Pharaoh's Doorway' (Delsin)
There aren't too many people really exploring the experimental side of the recent rush for Twisted House music but this Dutch label consistently puts out real sonic shuffle treats. So it's a bit of a shame that this latest release, from Detroit mini-legend Keith Tucker, is lacking in direction and energy, it just ...drifts off. Kind of like going to the bar in a club, subsequently losing your mates and spending the next three hours trying to find them. **EB**

RANDOM / NOIZE 'Trans-Humanza' (Destyl)
More Italian stuff here, this time from the Random-Noize crew. The 12" contains four full-length tracks and a couple of locked grooves, but there's not a great deal to write home about. On Side-A the DJ Rush-like stomp of 'Lightfast' sits next to the snarey stutter of 'Brother', whilst the flip contains the hard slam of the lead track, and the reverbed pizzicato of 'Cezna'. Not particularly bad, but not particularly good either. **NC**

OPTIEK 'Plan B' (Direct)
Currently residing in Birmingham, 19-year old Benjamin Trias launches a new label destined for club application by a range of techno and house DJs. Two of the three tracks standout - 'Plan B' is a thick club cut with filters rising and falling throughout the mix, whilst personal fave 'Work 12' stirs a moody deep house / garage vibe with superb snappy percussion. **DG**

>RECOMMENDED<
REGIS / SURGEON 'British Murder Boys' (Downwards)
As you'd expect from such collaboration, there's fiercely dark dancefloor action afoot on this latest Downwards platter. Both tracks incorporate obvious elements from the two artist's production styles but add a new, deeper edge to their polished Midlands minimalism. The A-side is doused in unsettling tones and covers a lot of ground compositionally, switching between sections of surging rhythms and stripped-down kicks with mood-moulding dexterity. On the flip a more customary cyclic approach is maintained, conjuring images of thick twilight urbanism with juggernaut drum loops and whining machine components. **VS**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

>RECOMMENDED<
INLAND KNIGHTS 'Northern Soil' (Drop)
As househeads worldwide await the imminent release of Drop music's debut LP "Creative Spaces", the hardworking Nottingham duo still find time to grace us with this classy three-tracker. Whilst B1 seems the more immediate of the two dancefloor numbers with it's crazy disco sample and fantastic live bass, the flip sees a solid chunky groover which builds all the way with some tasty flute riffs. Earth movin' stuff. **B**

>RECOMMENDED<
FUNCKARMA 'Part 4' (DUB)
Six serene joints of Star Wars dub from notorious Dutch doobies. The fourth release in an excellent EP series, this mammoth set of future-dubbers enter the upper echelons of glitch, pop and crackle electronica, with absurd ideas about timing and arrangement only adding to the appeal. Think fidgety rounded beats and languid dronescapes infused with emotive snatches of melody and a preponderance of bass. And a nice sleeve too. **VS**

BROTHER2BROTHER 'I Need House' (Dust Traxx)
Paul Johnson and Grant Gerrard team up for a serious divulgence in classic house sounds with four tracks that will probably get cool bars in Chicago rocking but only cheesy nitespots in the UK. A victim of geography for sure. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
Q-IC AND STEPHENSON 'In Stereo EP' (Drought)
Like a camel that's eaten too much peyote and then stumbled into a branch of Tandy, this is a beast confusingly at ease with technology. Bumbling around with a kind of lunatic high-tech approach to funk-rock, the sounds are frighteningly clever but underpinned by big-time edits and luxury beats. Track one bangs out nu-skool junglist-sounding breakbeat, tracks two and three behave like a four-year old in a rave, whilst track four ducks into a Moroccan porn shop. Drought rock the world once more. **EB**

WAI WAN FEAT. LORETTA HEYWOOD 'Feelin Me Feeling You' (Earthproject)
Four mixes of this jazz infused lounger for you to moon over at your leisure. The original sounds like Burt Bacharach (massive praise) joining up with Skint, and combines soulful horns with Ms Heywood's entrancing voice to create an orchestral classic. Wai Wan's own remix takes things into Latin jazz territory for those designer club situations, while the At Jazz crew visit more housey pastures and graze in lush chords and deep bass until their udders are fit to burst. Me? I'm off to buy myself a beret and some beads, you dig? **AG**

MICHEL DE HEY VS LITERON 'Transmitter' (EC Records)
Popular Netherlands DJ / producer Michel De Hey strikes out on his own label with a pair of well-produced yet derivate tools. 'Transmitter' is a rough-edged stompy techno with scratchy grating noises and few subtleties, but the highly rhythmic house of 'Stronger' is a much firmer offering, strangely enough. Bristol's prolific Jamie Anderson also re-energises the title track with some tough jackin' action, outstripping it hands down. **FJ**

DAMON VALLERO 'Sonic Motion' (Electracom)
A reasonable amount of movement and abstract sonics on Electracom's 15th release, although not as much as it's title would lead you to believe. The three differently flavoured loop cuts are joined by a dub-driven experiment in 4/4 that builds precariously to a twisted climax. Of the loop tracks 'Deep Diva' pulls away from the pack, using textural subtleties to create a rhythm-scape not dissimilar to Ho, Polson and darker Mills material. **DG**

MARCO BAILEY 'Kombatonen EP' (Electrix)
Billy Nasty's Electrix project reaches number four with this release from Belgium's Marco Bailey. Bailey plumps for a clean cut sound, making heavy use of orchestral washes and Germanic bass melodies for a very pleasant, if none too dramatic end result. Of particular note is the title track with its breathing textures, complex melody and Air-style vocoded vocals. Nice too, to see Mr Bailey exploring new pastures and showing us all that he has a breadth of talent so far unleashed on the listening public. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
ELEKTRO MUSIC DEPARTMENT PRESENTS 'Society Of Mind' (Elektro Music Department)
An interesting assortment of electronic flavours from Dirk Budde, with the quirkier moments making for a strangely compelling purchase. The A-side commences by borrowing Burroughs for a decidedly dark and throaty techno plodder. 'Jellyfish' is much better, with it's warped bass-driven minimalism, followed by the fucked-up hi-hat picnic of 'Hi-hats Sorted'. Although both of the first tracks on the flip are very uniquely produced, they're a little too disjointed and pale into insignificance when 'Crazy Comets' (a Commodore 64 composition by Ron Hubbard) gets brightened up into some classic comedy electro. **FJ**

BLACK NOISE 'Step Into The Darkness' (End To End)
A furious speech about Washington DC's young black community taking up the majority of the city's prison population sets you up for a piece of ghetto-bass but shuffles over to a melodic bleeping sound that has it's roots in the classic Planet E sound, trancey but rough - four-four but break driven. The B-side flicks tribal techno beats at a divergent melody before spiralling into a delay drenched snare festival that will send your dancing punters loopy. **EB**

SCAN 7 'Home Soil' (End To End)
Droned-out house music, neither up-for-it nor lethargic but somehow still pretty pissed-off sounding. It's the sort of stuff white bad boys might well crank as they drive through Central London, accelerating at pedestrians in their convertible Golf GTIs. But hey, that's not exactly a diss, is it? If I was in that situation I know I'd be listening to this sort of tune, cruising from record company to VIP lounge, drinking Courvoisier with Goldie and then spending the night with a coked-up supermodel. Damn right I would. **EB**

GECKO BROTHERS 'G-Scroll' (Energy Industries)
Chris Liebing and Andrew Wooden continue to hone their sound with a solid bit of Birmingham style minimalist loopery. A call and response percussive synth-line shifts it's accent points to evolve the rhythm while sharp hat action highlights the point and creates many a peaktime moment despite the overall dark atmosphere. On the Flip Nils Hess and Richard Summerhayes (aka Spacecops) work the track into a frenzy with a sustained, distant horn sound. Both skilfully produced and infused with an intimate knowledge of the floor. **AG**

PAUL AVENELL 'Nymph' (Energy Industries)
After dabbling in the world of hard house production this Grimsby producer returns to his love of techno and brings some of that 'avin' it' sensibility with him to produce this dark but triumphant loopy three tracker. The A-side belies his past most with it's energy inducing edits and swells while the two tracks on the B-side are darker affairs, sticking to the formula of menacing drum grooves with snare stab punctuation and dubby atmospherics. All in all this is a dynamically produced and thoughtfully constructed EP with a good understanding of the dancefloor. **AG**

V/A 'Eukahoused EP 2' (Eukahouse)
London's Eukatech Empire follows its successful CD compilation and sample EP with another label defining release. Soul Doubt are first up with a dubby plodder that builds around an infectious, butt-wiggling bass guitar part and ends up smothered in more pads and fx than you could shake a synth at. Jorge Zamacona (AKA Paul Mac) delivers a fuelled and funky accordian knees, while Wamdue round things off with a remix of Feral's 'Psychic Driving' that's rather noodly and muted. **AG**

CODE AND STRUCTURE 'Vol. 1' (Eruptive)
DJ tool alert. I remember when the first release on a new label would be something to behold, something different, special even... Well, this quartet of stern speaker grooves might be of intrinsic worth to its creator/s, but none of 'em will be winning prises for experimental sound design. Harder techno DJs should check the pair of drum-based builders on the B-side, which will both slip in and out of a set with pleasing effect. **DJ**

LUYGI VAN 'Placebo Effect' (Evil Deception)
Stylistically similar to his contemporaries Umek and Valentino, Slovenian producer Luygi Van enters the arena with a hard-hitting sound and a few clever edits displayed over three club-ward compositions, but its all pretty formulaic stuff. **VS**

SOUTH OPERATIONS IV 'The Four Horsemen Of the Apocalypse' (Evil Deception)
Elaborately packaged and fairly functional doublepack of tough techno from Sweden. With each side of vinyl adorned with a picture of some ugly European techno dude, and given a title of 'Pestilence', 'War', 'Famine' and 'Death' you know that 'The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse' on Evil Deception Records isn't exactly gonna be hands in the air and fluffy bras material. The three tracks on the first platter all work the floor in reasonable style, though Track C1 entitled 'Famine' starves the listener of any real interest. The D-side (by Ron Flux?) fairs best with a sombre Ho-style shaker followed by a heap of overloaded electro-acoustical angst. **FJ**

BYRON BOGUES 'Minimeals' (440Hz Records)
With his latest double pack for 440Hz we get a varied selection of minimal techno workouts, from the ultra minimal 'Bossdrum' (which features nothing more than a heavily manipulated distorted kick) to funky dancefloor numbers like 'Inword'. Although there are a couple of ill-considered space fillers, the majority display top quality inventiveness, well proving his ability to work a few sounds into something huge no matter what the style. Of particular note are the tough jackin' 'Gadget' with it's incessant bass sequence and scraping noise, the Germanic take on Mills of 'Inword', and the aforementioned 'Bossdrum'. Although much of this material has already been available, here its all been re-edited and re-mastered. So what are you waiting for? **AG**

PATRIOT 'One What?' (Figment)
A mixed three-track outing on Andy McLaughlan's imprint with a much rawer feel than previous releases. On the A-side a bouncy tribal groove gets infused with a slightly folky feel and rather grating screaming, joined by a quirky squelchy number with warm pads and a rather abrupt ending. On the flip abrasive mid-range and pounding kicks collide to form a definite dancefloor beast with a level of intensity that'll sit well in a tough techno set. **DJ**

AKIMI 'Soondie' (Fix)
Japanese Hip-hop is not the most high profile of music. It's gotta be hard work for a Japanese MC to get success, but Akimi have taken the challenge and powered ahead with this lo-fi EP of tech-hop. Think the Boredoms crossed with Subhead and you're probably still fairly off the mark. So this is not going to be everyone's cup of sake, but if you've a taste for the totally loopy you could have a good chance of digging these crazy vocal sounds. And if you're a Japanese speaker it may well sound like Mos Def and Eminem having an almighty mic battle. Someone please let me know. **EB**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

>RECOMMENDED<
MORLOCK 'The Scarlet Study' (Fix)
Fix continue their heroic rise with an EP of scary stalker-hop. The press release labels this "grungy fog filled cobbled beats from the East End" - and listening to this record you can imagine yourself on a Victorian street, lit by flickering oil-lamps with the stench of perversity and repression seeping through the night air. But, damn - does this record funk too. It's surprisingly accessible coming from Fix, and forgetting the slightly dodgy Leftfield style rap ('check one...') on one of tunes, you've got a top-class release which could well push Fix into the big(ger)-league. **EB**

JEFF COCHRAN & ADAM WINICK 'The Papa Ceo EP' (Format)
Named after Toronto's best pizza joint, this playful release serves up four bouncy techno cuts with distinctively different flavours, each named after a favourite slice. The conga-fuelled and somewhat eerie cyber-salsa of 'Al Pacino' is a definite deep pan, 'Roberto Benigni' and 'Marlon Brando Five Bucks' go for the fiery topping option, but 'Sofia Loren' unfortunately adds extra cheese in the form of uplifting chords and ends up a bit thin and crispy. **VS**

>RECOMMENDED<
AMBULANCE 'Harbour EP' (FrontEnd Synthetics)
The first vinyl release from FrontEnd Synthetics and the nascent electronica label are no doubt proud to be putting out this EP from production duo Ambulance. Having already released on Ultramack, Ambulance were also heavy contributors to FES's compilation CD last year. Their live show at the CD launch was nothing less than spectacular, and they've displayed an energy in their music that emboldens their polished execution. This four track release is an edgy episode with 'Ambulance!' skirting and skittish, trumpeting and thrilling. 'Harbour: Depart' and 'Harbour: Arrive' are gentler, encompassing deep-sea dives. 'Basshole' closes the b-side with a rat'n'tat work out that trips over the fastest fartiest bassline on the EP. Welcome to electronica excellence. **KB**

>RECOMMENDED<
SUREFOOT 'Slippery Mitts' (Geushky)
Portsmouth's revered techno club take a decidedly different tack with their first label release of 2001 by enlisting the studio skills of Surefoot AKA Geushky resident Dave Saunders and studio sidekick Barney Pratt. 'Slippery Mitts' strays into nu-skool breaks territory with a decidedly old-skool demeanour, utilising panned edits, dark brooding sub-bass, vocoder bleats and some nifty rewind action. Ian Void's rework on the flip kicks out a firm four-to-the-floor presence, taking snatches of the original and turning out a tough minimal throbber. **FJ**

PER MIKAEL & DANIEL GRONLUND 'Split This EP' (GFR)
Label boss Mikael Persson joins colleague Daniel Gronlund in the studio for some uncompromising footwork fare on a definite dark tip. Largely loops for techno jocks, there's enough twisted machine funk within these four cuts to keep floors moving and grooving even though there's little new thrown in the stew. B2 breaks away from the formula with its punishing electro rhythm, but ultimately it's the two more Millsian compositions on the A-side that'll see spin-time. **DJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
THE REAVER 'Mmmmm / Potion No.6' (Glyph)
A functional pair of club tracks that's sure to become a firm favourite with techno and house DJs of the funky persuasion. 'Mmmmm' cruises along in a User-esque style but with greater depth of production, building in hypnotic layers of sound, twisted reggae bass and tranced-out vocal delirium, whilst 'Potion No.6' is a meandering mid-evening techno groove that chugs and clanks along maintaining plenty of interest throughout. **DJ**

>RECOMMENDED>
G-MAN 'Night Trax Vol. 2' (GMR)
Ex-LFO member Gez Varley keeps his output consistent with more deep pulsating techno cuts for his own label project. 'K4' is a grand tech-house concoction, with uplifting elements layered atmospherically over a stern kickdrum. 'K5' and 'K6' pursue a more stripped-down dubby sound, the former standing proud with its wobbling bass-led groove and lofty metallic chords. Top quality. **FJ**

DUPLEX 'Autosave' (Ground Zero)
Whilst this offering from the Netherlands-based Ground Zero label wears its Detroit influences on it's sleeve (not literally), it's been produced well enough to hold its head up and take such comparisons as a complement. Polished synth work sits over padding house-styled percussion on the lead track, and there's some nice ass shaking electro here on 'Return'. Elsewhere, both 'Spheroid' and 'Doggin'' maintain the classic feel-good mood to complete a consistent release of high quality. **NC**

RUBEN 'Flat Twin' (High Octane Recordings)
Bastard backstreet techno clawing it's way from gutter to bar. That's both a compliment and a diss. I mean, get up and shake yourself down man, get a new suit and a shave and head out there for a brand new day, a new way to make yourself, and others, better. But then at four in the morning when you're jumping around to this after a Tequila binge, you're really not going to be thinking about presentation. Are you? **EB**

KENNETH GRAHAM 'Fire, Water, Machine EP' (Immigrant)
Tracky, mood-shaping house music from the US, with four softly-spoken grooves of infallible production. Standout is the title cut (the original, rather than the garage spirited 'Porterhaus' mix), where tight spacious percussion allows the many tonal layers to sit uncluttered in the mix. Sleek. **FJ**

DANILO VIGORITO FEAT. RANDOM NOIZE 'Informale 3' (Informale)
Danilo is yet another producer to emerge from the fertile Naples underground, following in the footsteps of Gaetano Parisio and Marco Carola. Here he presents three tracks of functional club tools which incorporate deeper house strains into the overall techno structure. There's a lot of this stuff about - one easy comparison would be with the aforementioned Carola's Question work. However it's executed with enough nouse to warrant checking out. **NC**

CHRISTIAN SMITH & JOHN SELWAY 'Excel' (In-Tec)
This particularly prolific pairing are back for another outing on Coxy's In-Tec label. The two tracks don't exactly cover any new ground for them, but there's enough funk between the kicks to give it merit. The lead track is built around a simple bass-line, with an inevitable filtered breakdown, whilst 'Shift' kicks a little harder, and features an uncanny Oliver Ho-style vocal sample. It'll certainly do the job on the floor, which is without doubt the point here. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Irritant 13' (Irritant)
A highly recommended and highly amusing 10" assortment of genre crossing cuts from a collection of Irritant cohorts. Two tracks of typically lo-fi melodic muzac from Scanform, one from Printed Circuit; two in a similar vein from Frederik Schikowski (including a great German sung vocal track). Two rough tough ragga tracks from Knifehandchop that creep into dutch hardcore territory, and a down beat, melancholic German vocal track from Plusminusnull, all wrapped up by the awesome pop electronica of 'This Is...' by Autoscooter. Lo-fi gabba folk pop electronica at it's best. Highly recommended. **M**

DJ EVOLUTION 'Something Unreal' (Jenetic)
The Megadog resident turns out an anthemic breaks number making full use of the classic rave vocal, as featured in the title, and lumping for a layered old skool synth feel to get hands waving and all that. He's joined in this venture by SoundTank who take the track into harder, deeper 4x4 territory and Elastic Trickery who go for a cluttered and somewhat dull techno angle. The 12 also features Dj Evolution's 'Escape From Tokyo' which was obviously a very high speed manoeuvre requiring a barrage of cheesy, high energy, hard house nonsense. Presumably, to dull the senses of his former captors. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
JAKE & THE ELECTRIC NUDES 'Proximity' (Jenetic)
Jumping to its feet following a somewhat below par fourth release, Jenetic head back down the tech-funk path and see a new production name achieving commendable levels of dancefloor drive. The original mix of 'Proximity' is an absolute killer, maintaining plenty of rhythmic interest throughout with a fine punchy bassline running amok and tightly programmed edits adding punctuation. Of the remaining mixes, Dr Flexible's reworks the original into a bouncing drum workout littered with funky machine noise, whilst the SoundTank lads take a darker but just as inventive angle with one pounding tech groove and an electro-flavoured wobbler. Great stuff. **FJ**

TONY THOMAS 'The Journey EP' (Kinetic)
Four peak-time floor tools here from Mr. Thomas - half of which combine nicely layered percussion, a tribal shake and effective vocal sampling. The remaining two tracks venture down the well-trodden path of the modulating minimal groove, but you're sure to have heard something similar many times before, and most likely done better. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
SIKORA 'Metropoler' (Klang Elektronik)
Top-notch twitchy tackle from Stephan Straka, featuring three cuts of exceedingly warped future house music and one grungy breakbeat experiment. My favoured choice is 'Grown' with its sharp skeletal percussion and unorthodox elements aplenty, but each track contains enough moody character of its own to beg repeated listening. If you liked Dan Bell's mix CD for Tresor last year, there's a fair chance you're gonna love this. **VS**

SAVAS PASCALIDIS 'Fantastic Voyage' (Lasergun)
After his previous projects for Kurbel this release finds Mr Pascalidis in jovial mood as he combines punishing techno production with the sounds of hi-nrg and disco. Unlike those who have chosen to filter an old sample or go totally retro, he has introduced crunchy, innovative production tricks to give what is essentially authentic disco a real place in 21st century music. Four attention-grabbing monsters with hard as hell techno sensibilities yet bound to make the most stern faced loop addict swing his pants. **AG**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

>RECOMMENDED<
JOHN MATTHIAS 'All The Time In The World / I Vow To Thee My Company' (Lifelike)
Matthew Herbert's Lifelike imprint darts eagerly down another avenue with this awe-inspiring seven inch of downbeat guitar n' vox pop from accomplished Bristol musician John Matthias. Combining traditional skills of musicianship with a noteworthy flair for studio enhancement, Matthias matches the Memphis Industries magic for achieving organic fusion but adds his own whacked-out twist. **VS**

DIGITAL PRINCESS 'Constitution of Sound' (LL)
The ninth release on Pacou's LL imprint, but the first outing for this particular outfit. The press release declares an 'emphasis firmly on the dancefloor with no messin'', yet this doesn't do full justice to the material on display. This being two tracks of finely crafted, dub-inflected deep techno that achieve their purpose with a classy subtlety. Both develop satisfyingly throughout their course - justifying their occupation of a whole side of vinyl. **NC**

T. ATKINS 'Mango Boy 003' (Mango Boy)
Tribal techno-tinged soul from that man McBean as he continues to forges a new sound for a new alter ego, although perhaps not as strikingly as the first two Mango Boy releases. Still, there's nothing to complain about with these two elegantly hypnotic DJ cuts; 'Live And Let Live' dips deep into light bongo-led percussion, thick warm tones and twisted vocals and sections of raw top end percussion, whilst 'Mayaglyph (Dub)' takes a similar sounding rhythmic slant in a more melodic direction. **VS**

SCAPE ONE 'Mode 1: Okeechobee' (Mass Transit)
Another experimental yet dangerously groovy release on Miami's newly formed Mass Transit label. Kurt Baggley AKA Scape One contributes all five of the highly original and infectious electro cuts to this release. Particularly noteworthy is Timeline, a rough fractured slice of machine funk for B-Boys everywhere. **M**

ALENIA 'Los Ritmos De La Noche EP' (Matrix)
Slovenian tech-house with the emphasis on tech. A1 is hands in the air disco-stomp, A2 is scratchy beef-beat, B1 is bar room bonkers and B2 barely breaks a sweat. Yup, the production is fat and you can tell the guy making it was having a good time, so this gets a thumbs-up from me even though I'd never buy it. Or play it out. Or listen to it on the Radio. Etc. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
NIEDERFLUR 'Minus:nd2' (Minus)
It's on Richie Hawtin's Minus imprint. It comes from Cologne. And it's called 'Niederflur'. Yup, you've guessed it - more of that ultra-minimal spacious shit that, whilst having less midrange than an anorexic stick insect, will push the right buttons for those of a deeper musical persuasion. This project by classically trained Christopher Klos and law student Hannes Wenner was apparently inspired by the environment within Cologne's subway system - a tone maintained prominently over the three tracks, ably assisted into the human domain with healthy licks of dub bass. **VS**

MIKE GRANT 'And Then It Was My Turn...' (Moods & Grooves)
Label boss Mike Grant finally gets his own way on his own label and does not waste his chance. Two tracks on side A are stunning examples of true Detroit house music; simple in construction yet dripping with emotion. Both boast gorgeous, soaring strings with 'The Struggle of my People' built around a slightly off-kilter keyboard line, while 'A Beautiful Thing' is just that, containing a very Detroit cymbal pattern. The Mr.G mix of 'The Struggle' maintains the overall feel, with an old house keyboard sound, but takes a trip to the dancefloor. **MH**

THEO PARRISH 'Segments From The Fifth Wheel' (Moods & Grooves)
Theo Parrish is a name that has become synonymous with fine downtempo house and classic sounding funk. The A side of this two tracker ' Chunky' builds up an awkward groove which, complemented by a juddering melody, slowly draws in the listener. On the flip 'Secondary Darkness' comprises a house based keyboard line with a novel clicking hi-hat rhythm. This sounds closer to what he is best known for but still offers enough to excite fans. Two different slices of deep and soulful house music. **MH**

DJ 'Q' HEY 'Re-Boot Remixes' (Moon Age Recordings)
A quirky pair of hard-loopers get done over by distinguished European techno players Ramon 'Hardfloor' Zenker and Marco Bailey. Zenker's mix of 'Log In' ups the funk levels by exchanging the dense rhythmic onslaught for a much more accessible electro framework, whilst Bailey keeps turns in a powerful enough loop cut that flags a bit towards the end. Both of the originals are vibrant for the style. **FJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
GAIDEN 'Hit The Switch' (Music Man)
Gaiden (Japanese for side story) is a truly commendable collaboration between NY techno terrorist Steve Stoll and Front 242's Patrick Codenys. The pair's first outing is a quartet of jackhammer hybrids that careers across four sides of heavy vinyl, from the wailing cyclic monster of the title track to the electro-fuelled chaos of 'Glory Days' and the brutal Brighton meets Birmingham assault of 'Point Blank'. 'This Syndicate' is the only track that doesn't quite come off, exchanging some of the spiky punk attitude for softer, more trancey elements. But on the whole, this is notable more aggressive than any of Stoll's material I've heard for the past couple of years, and sounding fresher for it. Keep those eyes peeled for the album in September. **DJ**

TOBIAS SCHMIDT 'Lo-Fi Soul' (Nest)
'A label that promises to make the world a very fucked up place' declares the press release for this second outing on Tobias Schmidt's imprint, and upon hearing this who am I to argue? Five tracks of markedly twisted lo-fi fun - like a two-step Beach Boys on helium with heavy distortion and feedback a plenty. Strangely soulful too. **DJ**

NEIL LANDSTRUMM '07' (Neue Heimat)
The king of crunch return with a three-track release of dark spiky machine music for Germany's Neue Heimat that's likely to be confined to the record boxes of only the most adventurous techno DJs. If clanking pressurised percussion, dirty strings and a brain-boggling bottom end pops your cork, you'll enjoy driving people off the dancefloor with this. **FJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
STEVE GLENCROSS 'Pushing & Shoving EP' (Neue Heimat)
Although there's a slight dip in quality across the four tracks here, Sativae stalwart Steve Glencross delivers one of the funkiest floor-rockin' beasts I've heard in a while. B1 (?) encapsulates everything I love about this style of techno - ripping bass line, punchy well-programmed percussion and all manner of crazed machine noise that serves to strengthen the groove rather than detract from it. **DG**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Noodles Discotheque Volume 2' (Noodles Discotheque)
Unintentionally introduced by Pete Tong and Arnie, the second release on Noodles Discothèque (Si Begg's sample mad imprint) is as cleverly insane and manically irreverent as the first. Not content with taking reference from classic disco, hip hop and electro tunes, Noodles takes whole chunks of these influential genres, cuts them up, filters them, loops them, then sticks them back together with all the skills of a master surgeon who's been working far too long without a break and has decided there must be a better way to arrange body parts. Not that the results aren't funky dancefloor gems - they are! It's just that they're also completely barmy! Highly recommended relief from the world of 'progressive' dance music. **M**

HANS WEEKHOUT 'Hang On To The Body / The Rhythm Is On A Mission' (Novamute)
The man behind '93's classic "20 Hz" by Capricorn and countless other acclaimed projects returns with this double A-side of edgy commercial dance music. The A-side features a passable but far from outstanding tech-house number with a call and response bassline and dubby fx over a fairly non-descript, chugging house rhythm. The B-side is squared firmly at the fields of techno and the more commercial progressive scene with a tough bass rhythm that's 'On a Mission' according to the title but gets hijacked by a Radio 1 synth breakdown and proceeds to go downhill from there. Having proved early on that there's more power in less elements, the progression into clutter leaves the second half of the tune weak and relying on breaks and kick-backs to have any force at all. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
TIM WRIGHT 'Searcher / The Walk' (Novamute)
The sign of great things to come from Novamute's most recent signing, Tim Wright. Wright, known better to the techno fraternity for his distinctive Germ and Tube Jerk material, debuts with some severe crossover tackle, combining garage, techno and breaks for two slabs of floor-fillin' Flat Eric freakbeat that, whilst adopting a more accessible/commercial edge approach than much of his past output, will get a damn fine rinsin' from loop gurus through to two-step terrorists. I reckon Novamute will do well out of this chap. **VS**

>RECOMMENDED<
JAMIE ANDERSON 'Black Sun' (NRK)
Bristol's notoriously prolific Jamie Anderson follows up his recent remix for local deep house groovers NRK with two mighty slabs of clean, driving and rather techy tackle that you'll want to play from start to finish and back to start again. Anderson's production style has long been commended, yet here he shows a deeper understanding of how to prolong suspense and how to use few elements effectively together. From the rising and falling hypnotism of the 'Stripped Down Raw Metallic Mix' to the voluptuous tribal garage of his 'Total Eclipse Mix, this'll get them dancing. Look out for his first album, released on NRK later this year. **FJ**

PLAYER 'Player 3' (Player)
More pumping techno funk from notorious North England players, with three solid tracks for DJs to work the floors; a tough Rotation-style cut on the A and two more crunchy (and effective) vocal infused workouts on the flip. The fuzzy jacking groove of B2 is the most fun offering - with Chicago, disco and old skool influences funked up to the max in the mix, but there's plenty to animate the floor here. **DJ**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

ADAM X 'Creative Vandalism EP' (Predicaments)
New York's legendary old-school techno man Adam X surfaces on Justin Berkovi's Predicaments imprint and delivers the goods once again. Four tracks of tight, jacking 909 rhythms, coupled with old school sounding vocal samples and jungle basslines reminiscent of Neil Landstrumm's 'Bedrooms + Cities'. As the title proclaims, ripping it up in an 'creative' manner. **MH**

DARK BOOGIE 'Abduction' (Product Deluxe)
Justin Deighton and Gary Marsden join forces with Peace Division's Justin Drake to produce this soulful but driven percussive houser built around some seriously strong bass stabs. On the Flip, 'Liquid' is a more sublime affair with a Chicago-esque vocal over tight rhythms and dreamy atmospherics - truly beautiful bit of nostalgia made relevant by cutting edge production. New Aluminists provide a remix which does their percussion and warm keys thing with style but sadly loses the impeccable vocal of the original. **AG**

DARC MARC 'Ptec X2 / Totalled In' (Pure Noise)
First release on this London based label and first production for the label boss. 'Ptec X2' combines electro bass stabs with a funky London Acid rhythm to produce an inventive and highly usable bit of techno that could slip into a broad range of sets. 'Totalled In' is a much more stompy affair which takes an early Armani / X-crash sound and gives it a UK techno twist to increase floor appeal. The two lock grooves featured however aren't even strong enough to be Casio presets. All in all an interesting start and a sign of much more innovative work to come. **AG**

PURPOSE MAKER 'Jet Set' (Purpose Maker)
'Lest we forget - despite excursions into conceptual film soundtracks (Metropolis), and beautiful string-led masterpieces (Every Dog.), Jeff Mills rocks dancefloors by way of producing and DJing tracks made expressly for this purpose. This must be the context in which this latest release is appreciated. Stylistically, there's less emphasis on tribal sampling than machine-made tones, but all three tracks contain that shake that only one man can make. **NC**

BANDO 'Patchwork EP' (Primate)
Four tracks of formulaic, funky techno grooves from this Madrid based producer. Shaky, panned top end, some pattering percussion and a solid tuned kick feature throughout with slight variation from track to track (i.e. the addition of an afro vocal stab, or perhaps a quick burst of synths) to ease the monotany. The best thing about this kind of release is that it might inspire someone onto writing something a bit more imaginative. **AG**

SHARED WORK 'Rien Ne Va Plus' (Primevil)
No great surprise to see another percussive four-track DJ tool from the Prime camp. Not that there's anything wrong with any of the cuts on this impeccably produced bit of vinyl as all will undoubtedly fulfil their purpose well. The pair on the darker A-side opt for deep textual disorientation whilst the B-side achieves a more playful tech-funk angle by increasing the percussive drive. 'The Capital' is probably the most memorable number due to the prominent bassline and snappy top end, but even that starts to tire after a minute or two in the mix. **DJ**

VASILY 'Neuralgia EP' (Rampe D)
Vasily Borisov's involvement with electronic music dates back as far as 1989 when he began DJing around his hometown of Moscow and later in 1995 opened Russia's first record shop 'Discocsid'. This is his first release on a non-Russian label, and an impressive debut at that. All four tracks are fuelled by a dancefloor-worthy 4/4, but each possesses a maturity that highlights an appreciation of deeper strains of electronic music, and an affinity with dubbier material. **NC**

SPINFORM 'Urban Legends EP' (Recordings Under Construction)
Well it sounded wicked on 45 before I worked out that was the wrong speed, but Spinform's record is still kinda okay when it's not speedambient freakstep. On 33 it sounds uncannily like Photek without the dense atmosphere - in fact very like Photek. I was going to give this some sort of credit because it's better than a lot of music I'm hearing today but... Jesus it sounds like Photek. Sort it out mate, you can program wicked edits with your own sounds! **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
TONY THOMAS 'Sound Properties' (Red Frame)
Derivative yet dangerous dancefloor gear from Tony Thomas, tackling the harder end of the percussive arena with four ever-effective bangers for DJs. The A-side fairs best for the style - two surging dark workouts combining the rhythmic thump of Dave Clarke and the textural movement of Oliver Ho, gelled together in Thomas's hard-hitting style. **VS**

REBUS TAPE 'Polyframe EP' (Reel Musiq)
Japan's leading techno imprint returns with the second outing of Rebus Tape. All three tracks do the business here, containing large helpings of heavy kickdrums, analogue squelchs and funky percussion. Where this EP wins for me is that the tracks sound distinct and different in today's environment, generating a hard and funky feel without sounding grinding and oppressive. **MH**

TED BJORLING 'Bollox EP' (Refill)
This EP is bollox., but thankfully by name not nature. Nope, just three utterly slammin' peak-time techno trobbers of the hypnotic percussive variety from a 20-year old Swedish student called Ted. For such a youngster, Ted sure knows how to swing his bollox. **VS**

MISSTRESS BARBARA 'Effet Karma' (Relentless)
Another appearance here for Miss Babs on her own label, and it's a largely mixed affair. Side-A contains two generic floor tools, but the tinny sound and overuse of filters create a somewhat grating effect. Things improve on the B-Side - dominated by a driving tribal number, utilising a spoken French vocal sample from the lady herself. There's also the inclusion of two 'sound FX tracks': someone walking down an echoing corridor in high heels - indispensable, I'm sure you'll agree. **NC**

TOMMY GILLARD 'Bandwidth:Lucifer' (Rogue Beat)
Ealing man Gillard returns to our speakers with this snappily titled sojourn into deep disco territory. Side A's opener, 'Summer Of "Love"', is pure good vibes house music, with an old time sample that wouldn't sound out of place on a Sneak record. The funk overflows onto the flipside, where the slightly more electronic sounding 'My Dream' patters along nicely. Finally the title track rounds things off with a Moroder-style bassline - sure to get asses shaking wherever played. **NC**

SVEN DEDEK & ALEX BAVI 'Electronic Envoy EP' (Rotation)
More lightweight techno from the Rotation stable, with two tracks of accessible grooves and a good-times dancefloor epic. The latter utilises a snappy house groove with thundering bass undercurrents to carry an anthemic synth stab that opens up predictably for the breaks and sits back in the mix when it all kicks off again. Frankly all a bit twee. The two shorter tracks are less structured opting instead for the subtle rising and falling of melodic elements with the inaptly named 'Physical Workout' barely breaking into a sweat and the much better 'Notorious Mover' creating a good deal of headspin beneath its punchy rhythm. **AG**

>RECOMMENDED<
M>O>S FEATURING AROY DEE 'Utilities' (Rushhour)
After releasing EP's by Deepart and Aardvarck, Rushhour return with a record from Aroy Dee, previously heard on Delsin's 'Going Thru Life' compilation. A1 and B1 are two hypnotic and hard-hitting dancefloor numbers utilising classic drum sounds and warm analogue noises. The second tracks on each side are more downtempo but keep with the very pure and classic sounds of the first tracks. For lovers of traditional Detroit techno and Chicago house, this is a very solid EP and definitely a name and label to watch. **MH**

CHRYSS DE BOND 'Chrysalid EP' (Scandium)
A French EP of functional club tracks that doesn't quite hit the spot. The first thing that springs to mind when you hear this is the name User, but these tracks are not quite as well done. There is nothing new or exciting here, all the sounds are far too familiar and the production is slightly muddy. Very average dancefloor fare. **MH**

DEETRON 'Dancing Manual' (Sector 616)
A mixed set of club techno from Swiss loop groupie Deetron, comprising of two workable percussive slammers and a much weaker pair of Detroit-esque numbers. A2 is the only one of the four that really reads the dancing manual - a frantic Advent-style juggernaut with turbulent bottom end hum. **FJ**

V/A 'Chemical Compounds' (Seismic)
No messing four-to-the-floor attitude from Seismic's Cozmic Spore, Toronto's Greg Gow, Detroit's Fanon Flowers and Slovenia's 'Alenia'. All four are on a pretty similar tip - dark-ish techno grooves with plenty of percussion changes and broody underones, I'd say Alenia's fine jackhammer drum workout and the collaboration between Cozmic Spore and Fanon Flowers propose the longest shelf life here. **DJ**

ESTHER OPEI 'All Squared' (Sheer)
A debut release for Manchester-based Esther Opei and as clear a statement of intent as you're likely to hear in a while. No info to go on, but there's four rough and ready cuts of peak-time, loopy techno here that will further endear Sheer to those DJs that like to play it straight. **ND**

SIMMER 'Machines / Manuals' (Shimmy Recordings)
After a long quiet spell Shimmy Recordings returns with two full-on dancefloor assaults from main man Simmer. 'Machines', a rework of an older 'lost' track, kicks in immediately and is relentless in it's constant pounding, definitely one for peak time havin' it action, whilst 'Manuals' is a more standard percussive loop driven number. Interesting pattern changes and progression coupled with really tight production serve to make it the best Shimmy releases yet. **M**

SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES SINGLES

EILKLANG 'Compiler of Compel Forces' (Shot)
Very, very unassuming club tracks. Pretty bland and repetitive. Nothing much going on. Sometimes Techno. can make me want to. go out and cause some. trouble. It's so boring. and does absolutely nothing. it makes me want to. set fire to a car. All I can think about listening to this is that they must have gone and made beans on toast for lunch immediately after doing the tracks. **EB**

GABRIEL ANANDA 'Shot 10' (Shot)
Take a large portion of gritty techno stomp and the sound of boots in sticky mud. Add the sound of someone tuning a guitar over the top, sprinkle with Germanic vocals and you have the experimental techno sound of Cologne's Gabriel Ananda. For a first release this shows enormous bravery and a truly original take on electronic music. Guaranteed to devastate and amuse any experimental crowd, whatever that is. **AG**

BLUE NOISE 'Sonorous EP' (Slide)
Following his excellent debut on Slide last year as Blue Noise, not to mention an acclaimed release on Creative, Belfast's Richard Fox turns out yet another high quality three-tracker here imbuing a much more uplifting feel into his distinctive 'tech-house' sound but never straying too close to commercial territories. To be honest, there's something about the title track that just doesn't push my buttons, but 'Process' as deep as you fucking like mate. **FJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
THE SOFT PINK TRUTH 'The Soft Pink Truth' (Soundlike)
Rub me down with baby oil and slide me across the dance-floor, this is pure complicated sex music. Like 'hands in the air' never happened, Drew Daniel keeps house in the ring with tough electro and techno ideology underpinning tape-edit soundbites and bad-ass analogue bass. I can't think of a club you couldn't drop this in and not get away with it. The two-step bugging and subtle gangsta toasting on 'Soft On Crime' force feed you groove and attitude, and along with the other three tunes keeps quirky and serious as close together as possible. Like, literally fucking each other. **EB**

SERGE SANTIAGO 'Push It' (Stompa Phunk)
Similar in feel to 'I Like To Funk', with its techy two step rhythms, spacey effects, electro-funk feel and whispered 'Push It' refrain, this, the second release from Brighton's aptly named Stompa Phunk collective effortlessly bridges the gap between breaks, deep house and electro. Head to the 'Spic & Span' mix for the most accessible dancefloor cut, packed with quirky little breaks, fills and percussive tricks. **M**

>RECOMMENDED<
ASSORTED KRAKHEADS 'Built On The Foundations Of Corruption Vol. 1' (Sprungcartellwachs)
Dirty, dirty, dirty electro from the bowels of the Southeast, with five sets of bad-ass battle beats making up the first of a four part compilation for Sprungcartellwachs. Welcome to half an hour of hissing cymbals, slobbering bass, and snares and hi-hats so clean you could eat your dinner off them (if they weren't so damn sharp). The opener, 'Breakin - Entering' by Pornfinger, is a tough one to beat, but all the tracks hold their own. **DG**

SONS OF SLOUGH 'Live EP' (Sprungcartellwachs)
The Sons of Slough make their vinyl debut with a live recording of four tracks from their acclaimed show. The result is low-slung machine funk of the highest order, highlights being the infectious cartoon pop electro of 'Boxhead' and 'Snares And Temptations' which pulsates with a sea of bass whist more melodic elements spiral in and out of the mix. **DG**

SEQUEL 'Upsolid EP' (Straight Ahead)
With remixes for the likes of Sabrina Johnson under their belt, Zurich based producers Gianni Sirave and Roberto Ceschi release their first EP of jazzy house lovliness. Tracks vary in rhythmic style, but it's real instrumentation and chord filled lushness all the way. Of note are the vocal talents of Jamaican singer/ songwriter Shoany White on 'Why', who can undeniably deliver a tune with a whole lot of soul and gives the music a coherence and purpose otherwise sadly lacking. Most of the music fails to make any kind of lasting impression despite the obviously considerable production talents of its makers. **AG**

LUNAR 'Stripe 004' (Stripe)
The producer's obvious obsession with space, as indicated in the track titles, is sadly lacking in this electro / techno three tracker. Heavily influenced the Detroit sound circa Red Planet, Lunar fail to create the spacious atmospheres necessary to make this style of music work and ends up with a flat sound that conjures images of nothing more cosmic than a Brighton bedroom. **AG**

MONIKA KRUSE 'Wavez' (Terminal M)
A rolliking riff driven housejacking liberal noise anthem type of tune. Lots of filter action to get your arms wagging at the tone of the crispy shiny highhats ride bell ooohhh...lovely percussion, big wob-b-b-l-l-ly basslines. But also turgid rhythms and no melody you can whistle along to, goddamit. Next! **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
KEINZWEITER 'Fractal EP' (3d)
Techno that has a sense of humour yet retains groove and flow is always a winner in my book. Experimental, crunchy, and on a definite minimal house tip, the third release for this German label grunts, burps and thumps along like the bastard sun of Subhead and Herbert. Check the cheeky garage-flavour of 'Sodbrennen' for some tooting twisted two-step, and the title track 'Fractal' for another hat n' bass odyssey. **VS**

>RECOMMENDED<
DAVE TARRIDA 'Paranoid (Again)' (Tresor)
Lick your lips over the fine line-up of remixers here. As well as Dave Tarrida himself turning in a Sativae style edit binge there's Christian Vogel in space-funk mode, Funk D'void still banging out the wibble-core funk and The Horrorist driving a juggernaut through a gabba disco. Any techno DJ with an ounce of sense is going to invest in this varied but totally rocking set of dancefloor charmers. **EB**

<RECOMMENDED<
JEFF MILLS 'Metropolis 2' (Tresor)
Three more tracks from last year's acclaimed Metropolis soundtrack find their way on to a limited vinyl release, creating a faultless package of dark brooding techno for deeper DJs. All have a distinctively organic feel acquired through his skilled mixdowns, 'Robot Replica' being pick of the bunch with its devilish piano tinkling and loose swinging rhythm. **DJ**

PHIL HIERAN 'The Bomb / Aftermass' (TT500)
What! Are you joking? The breakdown's just beginning and here comes the one minute long snare-roll. COME ON! LESSSS AAAVE IT!!! There's big swoopy synths playing riffs that sound like they were incidental music for Street Hawk and a load of sleeptastic drums sounding no more threatening than a yoghurt advert. Yup, it's rubbish alright. **EB**

NUBIAN MINDZ 'Check Da Vibe' (2000 Black)
Latest release on Dego from 4 Hero's imprint is a real rough number underpinned by a growling ragga influenced bassline, that harks back to old school rave days. Stepping beats and dark atmospherics including eerie female vocal samples, all add up to a genuinely dark and deep release. My only complaint is that it's pressed on only one side, and barely half of that. Still well worth it though, absolutely rocking. Check da vibe. **MH**

DI_INDICATOR 'Libra EP' (Ungleich)
It makes a nice change to come across an 'EP' with enough tracks to do justice to the term. Of course, it also helps if they're any good. This is happily the case with this latest 12" from Berliner Ronny Krieger. The six compositions cover a lot of ground, from electro to deep clunky house, and by all accounts it's well produced stuff. At times the material can seem a little tracky, but overall it's a wallet-pleasing success and definitely worth a listen. **NC**

PAT HURLEY / WING COMMANDER 'Green One / Ghetto Phunk' (Uber Recordings)
London based techno night Uber launches it's own label with tracks from one of its guest DJ's and residents respectively. Due to an almost inaudible pressing on the promo of Wing Commander's track I'm unable to comment on that, but the Pat Hurley track is the sort of techno monster that visitors to the club night have come to expect. Thundering bass and incessant percussion punctuated by sharp string stabs make it a stormer the floor. **AG**

HARVEY LANE 'Husk EP' (Veto)
First release on a new Birmingham imprint, seeing House Of God resident Harvey lane exploring the blazing loops and fucked up electro angle in adventurous style. Dancefloor interest lies on the A-side, where Brummy beats run amok with a nagging riff for company. Husky hullabaloo for twisted techno terrorists. **DG**

V/A 'Veto 001' (Veto)
This first release on the new Glasgow imprint lays down a decidedly varied agenda here, occupying a wide musical base. Featuring four separate production outfits whom I assume will become regular fixtures on the release schedule, the tracks on offer take in a large range of influences. Elements of minimal, smooth grooving, Detroit-inspired house, and uptempo but still melodic tech numbers sit alongside darker downbeat weird-step. There's plenty of potential here, which I think will come to light further within the individual artists output, and as a single 12" it's worth a listen for this reason alone. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
SPACE DJZ / BEN SIMS 'VoodooTrax 001' (Voodoo Trax)
Techno's long running outpost in the North East kick starts it's label in fine style. Representing the club's policy for driving future funk Voodoo regulars Ben Sims and the Space DJz contribute three classy dancefloor movements. Jamie Bissmire and Ben Long provide a track each - both functional tribal grooves embodied in the inimitable style of each producer, whilst Ben Sims provides a tough n' crunchy loop cut resurrected from a hard-to-find Hardgroove EP. With forthcoming releases including a cut from Weatherall and Tenniswood's Rude Solo alter ego, it looks like Voodoo plan to move with the groove. **FJ**

HAKAN LIDBO 'Ay Que Rica EP' (Yell House)
With releases on Moody, Loaded and Paper Hakan's house pedigree is well proven and here he continues to do the business with this piano led Latin beast. A kind of 'Get Get Down' piano is embellished with Cuban ivory tinkling and a whole heap excited vocal announcing the title. Bound to massacre more commercial floors. Unfortunately although more experimental in nature the two flip tracks are overly cluttered, a bit disappointing and frankly a waste of space when he's capable of so much more. **AG**

ALBUMS

>RECOMMENDED<
TENNIS 'Europe On Horseback'
Tennis, an ongoing London collaboration between Ben Edwards (AKA Benge) and Sprawl man Douglas Benford (AKA SI-CUT.DB), enters the world of pop n'glitch dub confidently among the upper ranks. When 'Civic Halo' pipes in with its cheeky bass, ghostly echoes and slurring bleeps, the obvious comparisons with Pole, Delay et al rush to mind. No bad thing, but be assured 'Europe On Horseback' rides its very own trail through the electro-acoustical hinterland, stopping but briefly at points of reference along the way. The best tracks seem to be stockpiled at the end, with the ambient electro dub of 'Port Helix' and the blissful 'Debonair Content' proving that playing tennis without a racket is much more fun. **FJ**

ACID ROCKERS 'Mindset' (Blue Room)
Electronic music is unique in that it can spawn stuff that really can sound like it had no human input into making it. Anyone familiar with demo tunes on keyboards will know that. And breakbeat trance is probably the closest thing after big beat contributing to this purposeless feature. So I'm not in favour of this from the start. The fact that the last half of this album does exactly the same in a jungle stylee almost makes me want to cry. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
TO ROCOCO ROT & I-SOUND 'Music Is A Hungry Ghost' (City Slang)
Thirteen tracks of warmly produced yet unnervingly claustrophobic excellence as Berlin's enchanting electronica trio To Rococo Rot follow up their previous collaboration with New York DJ/musician I-Sound. 'Music Is A Hungry Ghost' takes a few tracks to bed in, but once you reach the grungy dream-like electro of 'How We Never Went To Bed', there'll be few unstirred by the rich intensity of this sonic soup. Occasional nagging funk oozes from thick waves of glitchy instrumental sound whilst delicate rhythm sections lend some kind of submerged structure to it all. Check the tapping typewriter groove of 'Along The Route', where violins breathe spellbinding darkness into the synthetics, and 'The Trance Of Travel' where modems hum harmonics above strangely uplifting pads and whacked out drums. Like a complex twister of a movie, I know I'm going to enjoy this album more and more each time I listen to it. **VS**

FIELD 'Cocoon' (Cylence)
A relatively new name on the electronica scene, Field have previously released an EP 'Stretch Your Hands Out', and their first full-length offering is perhaps a thoughtful reflection of their eclectic influences. Field's jazz, drum'n'bass, atmospherics, minimal rhythms, pertinent found sound and samples, (preachers, Tibetan bridge builders and others), meld into a chilled, riveting dreamlike soundtrack. Fans of T Power and Pole should snap this up, but there's also something there of David Sylvian-esque quality. **MR**

LOOPOETS 'Binary Phonovisions' (Cylence)
Their name conjures up some horrible thoughts, whichever way you read it. And on paper, the music could come across as being I bit, tepid. I mean, "soulful two-step psychadelia" doesn't exactly sound riveting does it? Hang on, it does actually. Sounds bloody ace, and that is what this is. So basic but batty and lovely but lo-fi, it could be Pilote bigging it up down the local garage night. It's all good fun music supported by touching background eccentricity and fat hippo bass riffs. It's not going to be everyone's cup of Bovril, and at times you wonder why you like it, but it's not music to get deep to so sod it. **EB**

THIRD EYE FOUNDATION 'I Poo Poo On Your Juju' (Domino)
It's quite a departure from Matt Elliot's early days as a Bristol drum and bass kid, but besides that this remix LP is more in line with last year's 'Little Boy Lost' album. Elliot still has a penchant for letting his beats skid and trip over themselves, but he likes a bit o' transcendentalism on the side too. Full of pathos, he scripts chopped sonatas in his original work and he retains that mood in the remix work, firstly by virtue of the kind of work he's reprising and also because of his own emotional infusions. Reworking the likes of Yann Tiersen (French theatre and film soundtrack composer) or Tarwater (Krautrockers in the school of To Rococo Rot, Mouse On Mars etc) or collaborating with BrassEye Chris Morris all suits our triple vision friend. He wears their work well and imbues it with plenty of personal panache. **KB**

>RECOMMENDED<
ELECTRONIC CORPORATION 'Construction - Deconstruction' (Electronic Corporation)
Following on from their 1999 debut 'Plastic Omnium', Ive Muller and Rene Kirchner release their second collaborative album. Although German in origin all eight electro tracks are unashamedly Detroit influenced, both in sound and political aspirations. Classic Motor City fixations with the evolution of man and machine and understanding of their interaction are evident throughout. From the unrefined machine electronics of 'Save Your Life', meant as a message not to be dominated by the daily struggle of life to 'Music is the Voice from Beyond' with it's hypnotic rhythms and mantra-like title refrain and the atmospheric '... Something Better Than Man?' posed as an open question urging evolutionary thought. The overall feel is very similar to Dopplereffekt, Drexciya et al. Raw and uncompromising it glorifies in its machine-based origins yet is infused with the subtle warm beauty that was a defining feature of the early Detroit producers. **M**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Natural Music Vaporiser Volume 2' (Eskimo)
The cover of this 16 track mix makes the bold assertion that the 'box contains 100% pure emotion'. Naturally my suspicions are aroused but for once I can honestly say I don't feel let down. Containing classic tracks both old and new, from James Brown's 'Payback' to Lambchop's 'Up my People', this is an emotion soaked trip through the annals of quality dance music. Also featuring the talents of MFSB, Bill Withers, Lil'Louis and M1, this CD oozes absolute class from beginning to end and leaves me dying to track down Volume 1. A la carte music for connoisseurs. **MH**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Sound Of Eukatech 5' (Eukatech)
Quality pristine techno from the fellows behind the Covent Garden record store, labels and club nights. The latest in the Eukatech series, this is how all techno (and techno compilations) should be - sleek, smooth, atmospheric, rhythmically mesmeric, and representative of the established and new talent. Standout track for me is from Bolz Bolz- their 'Take A Walk' is the first track and serves as a fine introduction whilst Ian Void, Hard Floor, Gaetano, Reck and many others contribute to a top-notch compilation. **MR**

>RECOMMENDED<
MICE PARADE 'Mokoondi' (Fat Cat)
Extremely wiggy fusion of styles, too many to mention, turned into a jumping world music party. On first listen it seemed this was going to be a little too up-it's-own to become a real listener, but after a couple of plays really clever, uplifting melodies swelled through the clash of sounds. With the live speed-break drumming keeping things funky there's a lively and content feeling about 'Mokoondi' that really captures the imagination. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Milesahead presents Incontinental' (Groove Technology)
A nice meeting of minds this, as London's Milesahead folk (who include Overload contributor Dave Stelfox) offer their collective sharp-ear to launch Internet broadcaster Groovetech's new label. Listeners to Milesahead's midweek show will be aware of the trio's ongoing fascination in finding beats where others don't look: check Schneider TM's re-working of The Smiths' 'There Is A Light...' for evidence. Elsewhere, the work of Dan Berridge, Manitoba and Fug prop the more leftfield CD, with Atjazz, Spacer and Two Banks Of Four bringing the beats on the dancefloor-gazing second. Perhaps most commendably Incontinental makes full use of two CD's - the jazz-rooted first progressing from being maudlin and twitchy, through funky and smooth (especially Trio Electrico) to tribal and straight ahead (Idjut Boys/Laj), the drum-driven second merging wierdbeat, oddball house and Detroit influenced textures. For an intro to, or emphasis of the vibrancy existing in genre-defying, template-tearing, progressive music, you're in the right place. **ND**

>RECOMMENDED<
DJ ASSAULT 'Off The Chain For The Y2K' (Intuit-Solar)
Based around a radio show format (complete with shout outs from some of Detroit's finest citizens), 'Off The Chain' features 83 (count 'em if you can) ghetto-tech jams, cut and scratched together at a worryingly fast pace, alongside some more familiar non-booty tracks - 'No UFO's', 'Alleys Of Your Mind', 'Energy Flash', 'No Way Back'. 808s and 909s sit alongside breakneck breaks in the mix, more often than not peppered with 'vocals'. Most will be familiar with at least a handful of these smuttilly entitled numbers - rest assured, there's enough to keep your average schoolboy tittering for weeks. This is straight up party music, and has merit as such. It's greater than the sum of it's parts - comedy factor alone won't keep you coming back to it, but it does make strangely compelling listening, and Assault's mixing has to be heard to be believed. 'Off The Chain?' - you bet your booty it is. **NC**

V/A 'Comin From Tha D 'Blueprint' (Intuit Solar)
Intuit Solar seems dedicated to representing the best of underground music emanating from the much hallowed Motor City, and thankfully avoids becoming caught up on the regurgitation of myth and legend that at times acts as more of a hindrance to producers in the area. The 16 tracks contained on this CD occupy a broad stance, musically - from the weirdigan electro of Le Car and Dopplereffekt, ghetto-tech of DJs Godfather and Assault, to the comparatively more reserved work of Andy Toth or Maersk. It's a raw and at times warped sounding cross-section of a city's musical output - those looking for ethereal strings and reverse edits can look elsewhere, but as representation of diversity in a city which continues to spawn innovative electronic music, it does it's job well. **NC**

ALBUMS ALBUMS ALBUMS ALBUMS ALBUMS

>RECOMMENDED<
MANITOBA 'Start Breaking My Heart' (Leaf)
Something about Dan Snaith's music tells you he's mathematically minded. Not that there's any kind of awkward rigidity to his sublime debut long player as Manitoba - quite the contrary in fact. A masters-qualified pure mathematician in the daylight hours, they sure as hell must have a lot of night time in Toronto because the eight new compositions here are as intricate and meticulously constructed as his two previous Manitoba releases for Leaf (the 'People Eating Fruit' and 'Paul's Birthday' EPs - both of whose title tracks appear here). Whilst Snaith's glitchy computerised collage of self-played instrumental melodies and loosely programmed polyrhythms sounds like rather like experimental playground jazz, it drips with all the soul and emotion you'd expect from someone who used to spend his summertime sitting on the roof of buildings playing noodly sentimental folk guitar. Essential. **VS**

SEAN DEASON 'Allegory & Metaphor' (Matrix / Intuit-Solar)
As a member of the so-called 'Third Wave' of Detroit producers, Sean Deason has at times been eclipsed by the more famous members of the fraternity, but here he amply demonstrates that he can more than hold his own amongst the ranks. 'Allegory & Metaphor' has Detroit written all over it - it's drenched in emotion, and spacey - but manages to conjure a futuristic feel without re-treading old ground. Deason displays a mature mastery of each musical component, enabling him to craft beautifully textured soundscapes which avoid ever sounding cluttered or inappropriate. Percussion is used sparingly, and with variance - some well-executed breakbeats ensure that, as an album, it has more lasting appeal than yet another collection of 4/4 shakedowns. I'm reluctant to resign it to 'home-listening' status, as there are tracks with a kick-drum driven insistence, notably '2030 AD', and the Claude Young collaboration 'Zig', but it works very well as a larger piece of work. **NC**

SONAR LODGE 'Soundeffects' (Music For Speakers)
The first album from Richard von Kruysdijk and the second from Music For Speakers. Again the music is not easily classified, though its inability to sit comfortably in any one musical pigeonhole is highly commendable. Featuring what sounds like both acoustic and electric guitars, piano, trumpet, the scratching of labelmate Aardvarck and (of course) sound effects, the quality of the sound is rich and full. The vocal talents of Marie-Claudine Vanvlemen are utilised on most tracks, adding to the smooth, laidback and jazzy feel of the album. Seriously well produced music. **MH**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Compilation 1' (Music For Speakers)
A selection of tracks on a new label from Holland which features the talents of Aardvarck, David and Sandor Caron, Madcap and Sonar Lodge. This is an exciting blend of music old and new, drawing on elements of jazz, hip-hop, dub, techno and drum and bass to create a space-age melting pot of all these genres and more besides. Including both vocal and instrumental tracks this CD is consistently innovative, always soulful and guaranteed to relax mind and body. A truly genre-defying album without a single below par track, this is an exceptional collection of hauntingly melodic and melancholic music. **MH**

PHUTURE 303 'Survival's Our Mission' (Music Man)
There aren't many recording artists around these days who can stake a claim on being the first to use a 303 on record. Phuture 303's current streamlined incarnation consists of original member Earl 'Spanky' Smith and Damon 'Professor Trax' Neloms, with DJ Pierre drafted back for one number (a re-interpretation of the Lil Louis classic, 'Blackout'). This is a meaty collection of new material, comin' at ya in the format of three double vinyl packs. 'Survival's Our Mission' is certainly more than just a title here - their blueprint for doing so involves the embracement of more linear European elements into the Chicago mould. It's a successful hybrid; more than just a crude graft of styles, as is evident with 'Riden', and 'Vintage Drums' - both thunderously driving tech tracks. Those looking for more classic sounding material will have plenty to get their teeth into also, most obviously with 'String Free'. I don't have the space here to tell you the merits of each of the 15 featured tracks, but suffice to say it looks like Phuture will continue to survive for quite some time to come. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'The Death Of Cool Part 2' (Noodles / Leaf)
Returning to the site of previous preposterousness, arch beat-freak Si Begg collates more outrageous oddities of pan global origin to augment the original Noodles ethos. Highlights (too many to mention) include Jamie Lidell's low-slung human beat box buffoonery, trumpet-drunk techno from Sand, killer electro from Micheal Forshaw,' and a bloodthirsty cut up of the Spice Girl's 'If You Want To Be My Lover' by Culture Cruncher. With 25 japes sewn into a sonic spin, there's admittedly one or two that slip through the quality control, but it's all united with such forethought and joviality it doesn't seem that important in the grand scheme of things. Something to please everyone and something to offend everyone. Now that's the true height of cool. **FJ**

>RECOMMENDED<
VENETIAN SNARES & SPEEDRANCH 'Making Orange Things' (Planet Mu)
In an age when The Popstars are assured of a 'straight in at number one' even before the band has formed let alone "written" the song it seems increasingly hard to accept that there is any musical dimension to the formula for popular appeal. Not that Venetian Snares or Speedranch have ever given a fuck about popular appeal. Preferring instead to tread a highly individual path that follows the almost indistiquishable line between music and noise. This much anticipated collaboration between Manchester's 'noisecore vocalist' Speedranch and Canadian Aaron Funk for Mike Paradinas' Planet Mu label is all and much more than was expected. Combining the original raw energy of punk with speedcore trash metal, hardcore breakbeats, a love of cheesy classics (Bon Jovi, Stairway to Heaven, Dolly Parton etc), the twisted humour of A League of Gentlemen and as many knob twists, filters and effects as is humanly possible 'Making Orange Things' is the perfect antidote to the MTV/McDonnalds/Popstars dross served to the masses. Probably the nearest thing to pure evil ever to appear on vinyl or CD format. Highly Recommended. **M**

V/A 'Stone.Scissors.Paper' (Play)
Tasty compilation from UK/Japanese label Play full of dub-hop headnods. J Saul Kane opens things up with 'Akira' which shimmers and staggers like the film of the same name. From then on it's time to get your paddles out and row the murky swamps of Dub Creek. Some tracks are quite innovative, The Mighty Quark's 'Keep That Money For Us' slow moves house through echo-chambers and DJ Khuv and Harviks's 'Owl' is like Mick Harris producing Courtney Pine - but some of the rest are just a bit too, well... clean. Not necessarily a bad thing, but. **EB**

ORGAN GRINDA 'Creative Combustion' (Pro-Jex)
LP of ultra tough street techno on Charlie Hall's Pro-jex label, aping the jack-attack sound of Chicago's DJ Rush in an uncompromising albeit plagiarised speaker assault. Geared strictly towards club application, Corey Holloway's productions make all the right moves to get you to workout heaven and no-where in between. The percussion is punchy and super-bright throughout, whilst the tone lurks unsettlingly between Rush, Green Velvet and Robert Armani. However, despite numerous playful interludes to accompany the functional cuts, the package doesn't contain quite enough of its own twist warrant the title. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
DJ SHUFFLEMASTER 'Exp' (Tresor)
This debut LP for Tatsuya Kanamori serves to make concrete the agenda laid down by a string of well-received 12"s and credible takes on the work of others in his remix output. Best purchased on vinyl format, it's a tracky collection, but a very good one. Tense percussive structures are interwoven with shimmering atmospherics and clanging chords; there are a few nods to contemporary influences, but essentially the pieces are bound by his own highly synthesized sound. Notable highlights include the hardfunkin' tribal stomp of 'Guiding Light', synthy Surgeon-esqe drive of 'Imageforum', and deeper strains of 'Dawn Purple' and 'Flowers Of Cantarella'. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
ANDREA PARKER 'The Dark Ages' (Quatermass)
With only five tracks this is more of a mini-album really, but every second of it is precious stuff. We're talking seriously deep music, electro taken to the darkest parts of modern classical and then spiced up with luscious b-lines. The classic Roland drum machine sounds have really come alive as Andrea Parker creates compellingly simple angularity out of kicks, hisses and snares. And even though the mood gets seriously blitzed by the end, a whole album of this would be a very enticing prospect. **EB**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'The Braindance Coincidence' (Rephlex)
To celebrate one hundred releases of bona fide Braindance Rephlex bequeath unto us a really rephreshing collection of rhythmic rhapsody. And to celebrate Rephlex celebrating their one-hundredth release, Overload asked six-year old Connall Lee to assist with the review. The highlights are as follows: the squelchy electro-pop of 'The Glass Room' by DMX crew made him think of his "bad plans", the chaotic vocal-drenched 'Kymera' by Mike Dred and Peter Green brought to mind "stinkbombs that you eat", 'Robotic' by Vibert and Simmonds conjured images of "Robots" (oddly enough), and as for the Steven Hawkin's meets Craig David genius of 'Rewind' by Cylob... well, he was just too busy dancing. **CL**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Staedtizism 2' (~Scape)
The second 'Staedtizism' collection on Stefan Betke's ~Scape imprint continues to plumb the depths of dubtronics, conscripting another roster of radicals from around the globe. System and Jan Jelinek set a serene scene with thick soulful waves of pulse and glitch, then John Tejada picks up the pace with some twitchy guitar-fuelled pop before Process, Nolte and Bus darken the tone with atmospheric bass-scapes and a smattering of freeform jazz futurism. The second record embraces the more playful nature of the style, with the bass-obsessed Burnt Friedman and Beige cranking out the circus-core electronica pitching intricate melodies onto unsettling backdrops alongside other lesser-known nob twiddlers. This extremely visual collection of electronica will enter the darkest recesses of your mind. The machines have never sounded so warm. **VS**

STACEY PULLEN 'Today Is The Tomorrow You Were Promised Yesterday' (Science)
Pullen threads a preoccupation with time through his latest LP. He opens with the track that was made the longest time ago 'Tsunami', and closes with the most recent production 'Workshop401,' a blueprint for his next album. All that lies between is a variety of classical Detroit techno, polyrhythmical turns, drum and bass jazz loops and all served with a fine and funky disposition. Pullen is widely accredited as being an important component in the evolution of the Detroit sound, being an early user of afrocentric rhythms and he is well capable of turning out an album that ranges beyond the ordinary. However, there are moments of flakiness, and 'Vertigo' complete with operatic vocals is weak as is the 'Futuristickfreakqueen.' Filled as it is with such classic gems as 'Juke,' or the only dancefloor shooter, 'Powershot' it's hard not to find fault when the album is not overall entirely up to scratch. **KB**

>RECOMMENDED<
EWAN PEARSON 'Small Change' (Soma)
Ewan Pearson is otherwise known as Maas, who debuted with 'Latitude' on Soma in 1997. Since then he has carried out remix duties for a number of different artists, from major label Leftfield to Aaron Carl of Metroplex fame, and this is a compilation of his favourite remixes. Although there should be questions asked about the Mr. Blobby style pink and orange artwork, there can be no doubting the quality of the music on offer. Despite the diversity here, from the extensive spoken word ambience of his Christian Zimmerman mix, via the warm trip-pop of Yoshinori Sunahara, to the soulful dance floor funk of Chaser, sonically Maas has stamped his mark on all the tracks. There are no fillers here: each track, although different, adds up to a high-class home listening experience. 'Small change'? I don't think so. **MH**

SILO 'Alloy' (Swim)
Swim champion all things lo-fi and post-rock so we should champion them but this release is a step backwards. Silo lie somewhere between Mogwai, Loop (all sounding good so far), Ozric Tentacles (oh...) and Depeche Mode (blimey.) Which is being a bit unfair because 'Alloy' is nice music to listen to. It's all in funny time signatures, (y'now, those ones you can't dance to) and played by a band. Weird... people playing instruments. Anyway, I don't want to sound like I'm giving advice but lose the synths guys and get freaky on guitars maxed through f/x. It'll do you a world of good. **EB**

DAFT PUNK 'Discovery' (Virgin)
Any fan of the Parisian punkers will know that they've never really taken themselves seriously in the pop scheme of things. But with this follow up to the titanic Homework album four years ago, they are in danger of inscribing themselves in the annals of music genius, complete with a fanbase that takes them very seriously indeed. Yes, it's cheesey: their name flashes across the cover in mercury and there are unbelievably blatant lifts in their numerous instrumental odes (clock 10cc's 'I'm not in love' on 'Nightvision' or Prince's 'Ballad Of Dorothy Parker' on 'Short Circuit for starters.) and meanwhile we're asked 'why don't you play the game?' But it' s an easy game to play because in between the Van Halen solo and Jarre jesting there's plenty of disco music made for dancing, alongside endearing ballads - 'Something about us' is gorgeous and sweet and made by people who care very much. It might be easy to think they're just taking the piss, but I think they're on our side. **KB**

MIXES

V/A 'Excursions 3: Colin Dale' (Obsessive)
This is a double CD of polished house flavours and grooves, immaculately mixed by one of the godfathers of the genre, the legendary Colin Dale (not to be confused with the Northern Line station near Edgware). The mix showcases a variety of styles from the vocal and soulful to the more minimal and jacking, though overall the sound, just like the mixing, is clean and spotless. For true house afficionados this comes recommended, but if you like your music a little rough around the edges I would advise listening elsewhere. **MH**

V/A 'Freddie Fresh Presents Abstract Funk Theory' (Obsessive)
Mr Fresh is famous for his twin obsessions of breakbeats and analogue exploration, so his choice of music here should not surprise anyone. Probing the outer limits of most musical genres, Freddy comes up with some typically weird and wonderful gems from yesteryear. From the highly obscure and sought after tracks such as Cat Stevens 'Dog was a Doughnut' and Quadrant Six 'Body Mechanic' to classics from Dan Curtin and Inner City, his selections are cultured and imaginative. Also including two exclusive tracks of his own, (one recorded with Mann Parrish), this is the journey through experimental electronica you would expect from a maverick such as Freddy Fresh. **MH**

>RECOMMENDED<
DJ T-1000 'The Last DJ On Earth' (Primal Rhythms)
Although better known for his illustrations, most notably for the Dutch Djax Up Beats label, Alan Oldham has also steadily built himself a credible reputation as both a producer and DJ. His DJ career started in 1987 with a five year run on Detroit's influential WDET-FM radio show, then standing in for the newly departed Jeff Mills on an Underground Resistance tour of Australia, DJ-T100 was born. The Last DJ on Earth is the debut release for Primate's newly formed sister label Primal Rhythms. The labels objective is to showcase the talent and individual style of the globes leading techno DJs. Recorded 'live' on three decks and a DJM-600 mixer with plenty of two copy action and use of the mixers inbuilt effect the result is tight, inventive and interesting. The track listing reads like a who's who of contempary techno (name five of the best known techno producers and I bet at least four of them are here) and rather than being an abstract collection of personal favourites easily reflects the sound heard on the dancefloor. **M**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Dave Clarke: World Service' (React)
Within a minute of the first CD starting, Clarke is already working doubles of the first track. Clear then, that this is a no-nonsense representation of peak time floor damage from the man of whom most people have an opinion. CD1 represents the incendiary 4/4 angle to his DJing persona, containing 24 cuts from some of the most respected names in the business. The mixing is tight, with some nice use of effects, and while the reader may possess their own feelings on the need for another hard techno mix to be presented to them in CD format, Clarke keeps the energy levels high. The second part of this mix warrants purchase alone. Renowned for his love of electro, this is the third occasion in which Dave has laid it down for the discerning armchair clubber, but by far the most varied yet. His selection will appeal to both the avid electro fan, and relative novice alike - encompassing excellent tracks from the likes of Adult, The Hacker, Keith Tucker, Anthony Rother, and Radiohead. Dave waves aside the criticism that 'all electro sounds the same' with a knowledgeable, and at times very deep selection. **NC**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Theory Of Interpretation - Mixed By Ben Sims' (Theory)
There's clearly a little post production going on here, but when DJs like Dave Seaman will unashamedly declare on TV how there's "actually three of us involved with my latest mix CD for Renaissance", it doesn't seem to matter that much, especially given the nature of this project. This popular London producer commissioned a whole heap of remixes for the Theory back catalogue, as reviewed in Overload 6.0, and here he ties up the project by joining them together in his frenetic funky style. A straight mix of Sims material would probably send shivers up the spines of those who shy away from the funky loop, but with the likes of Suburban Knight, Blake Baxter et al adding their own flavouring there's plenty of rhythmic variety whilst keeping a large textural element of Sims' originals to hand. If tribal dancefloor tackle is your bag, this'll get have you nodding and tapping on those last night drives. **DG**

>RECOMMENDED<
V/A 'Komfort.labor - Compiled & Mixed By Pole' (WWF Records)
Having tempted many new converts into his unique realms of bass and space over the past twelve months, peerless pioneer of pop 'n crackle dub Stefan Betke has also spent half that period preparing this, his first ever mix CD. And yes, he's really put some thought into this, and as you'd expect, it starts (and ends) with a click. Drawing many of his ~Scape collaborators into the mix, this really is an intoxicating antidote to a night out on the loops. Building tentatively from the likes of Vladislav Delay and Kit Clayton, it's almost impossible to pinpoint where most of the mixes merge - just how it should be done to showcase such an ambling aquatic assortment. The likes of Maus & Stolle and Farben (Jan Jalinek) steer the course into (slightly) more pronounced rhythmic territory, and by the time Betke drops in his mighty 'Rondell 2' you feel thoroughly nourished by the rich and moody spread of innovation on display. It's a bold thing to say, but this is one of the best mix albums I've ever heard. Respect. **FJ**

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BOOK SELECTER

overload

'Space Is The Place' The lives and times of Sun Ra by John F. Swzed (Mojo)

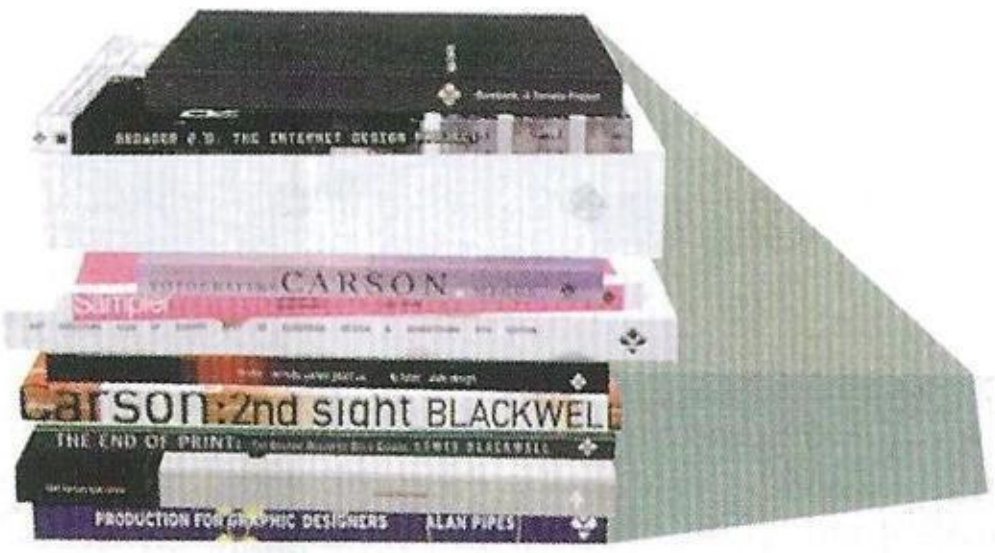
This monumental biography was published last year, seven years after the death of Sun Ra at the age of seventy-nine. Monumental is an appropriate word to describe the book on many levels. Its subject matter is one of contemporary music's most intriguing characters. He also has remained one of the most elusive, officially changing his given name Herman P. Blount to Le Son'y Ra (commonly known as Sun Ra) and would only respond to queries about his youth by saying he did not come from planet earth. He lived a life that was immersed in music, forgoing women, drink, drugs and any other distractions, being a vegetarian (well before the sixties) and a pacifist (dating from the second World War). In light of his determination to keep his 'human' life obscure the biographer, John F. Swzed's treatment of the formative years in the first part of the book gives a remarkably strong picture of the prodigy who became acknowledged as a jazz genius.

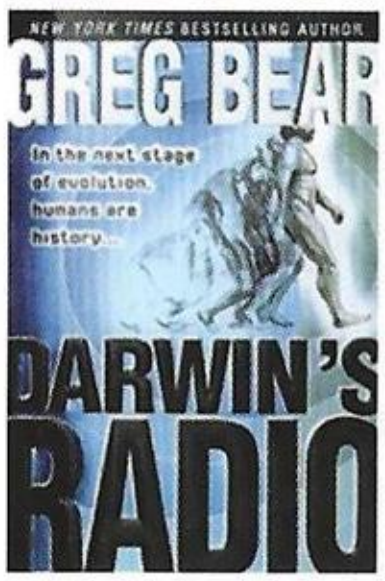
Swzed is a Professor of Anthropology at Yale University, while also having joint appointments in African American studies, Music and American Studies. So he appears to be pretty qualified to take on the intricacies of a man who was determined to find an alternative history to the white man's and use music as a code in a fashion akin to a secret order. Swzed's writing also qualifies him in his great appreciation of Sun Ra and his music and translating it into an enjoyable narrative, interspersed with quotations of Sun Ra or the musicians who worked with him.

Blount grew up in Alabama, in a sheltered community that had a strong tradition in the education of music. Academic and a voracious reader, he went on to study classical piano (including the likes of Rachmaninoff and Shostakovich) in Alabama State College for Negroes. Moving to Chicago he worked with the father of swing, Fletcher Henderson and began the formation of his band the Arkestra. Training the band, Sun Ra's intuitive genius was represented by the unbelievable discipline in rehearsal which would result in childlike partying on stage. Despite being a prolific composer, he would also improvise greatly, even citing the entrance of a late member of the audience as reason enough to change the flow of his orchestration. He also expected improvisation from his musicians, but only because they understood what he was trying to say.

What can be hard to construe from the book is what exactly the message was. Metaphors of Egypt, space, the future (manifest in his long standing fascination with electric instruments) and fantastical performances alongside the creation of some of the most mental music going are difficult to decipher. But it would seem that was his intention after all.

WORDS> Kate Butler





'Darwin's Radio' by Greg Bear (Harper Collins)

As foot and mouth ravages the animal population of this country, so one naturally takes a renewed interest in all things viral, cellular and communicable, doesn't one? I set out with the intent of finding a book that would give me the heebie-jeebies in these contaminated times. I found it.

'Darwin's Radio' is science-fiction in the literal sense of the phrase - there is a glossary of scientific terms and a short biological primer at the rear of the text, where it becomes abundantly clear that Bear's evolutionary vision is not so far fetched as might be expected.

Evolution is the key to this novel as humanity faces a paradigm shift in the way it sees itself, and indeed, in the way nature views the human race. Pregnant women are becoming susceptible to a disease that forces them to miscarriage. The government announces that this new disease cannot be stopped.

But deep within the DNA that makes us what we are, genes that have been unused for years begin to wake up, exerting their inexorable influence: the women who have miscarried become pregnant again, without any sexual activity. The children are born dead, and different. The Herod virus as it becomes known, puts entire generations at risk. The question is asked: whose children are these? The future of the human race is in the balance as throughout the world superstition and violence takes over. Women begin to mistrust men. The sexes drift apart as the governments of the world desperately try to develop an effective vaccine.

As panic sets in across the globe several findings concur with the minority viewpoint that what the human race is experiencing is not a genetic plague designed to terminate human life, but an enhanced evolutionary step for the human race. A chance discovery of mummified remains in the Alps, and an examination of a mass grave in the Caucasus confirm what only a few scientists believe: the babies are showing signs of slightly altered features, and the parents are subtlety changing too. Perhaps a vaccine is not needed, rather an acceptance that we are evolving constantly in many ways, and that it should be only natural that eventually we will begin to physically evolve?

At times the scientific terminology employed on almost every page is overwhelming, and one must pay close attention to the glossary if one is to understand the development of the arguments within the story. 'Darwin's Radio' is one of those defiantly challenging books that lay down solid scientific foundations, and upon those develops fantastic, yet undeniably realistic scenarios. Look for a sequel later this year.

WORDS> Mathew Riley

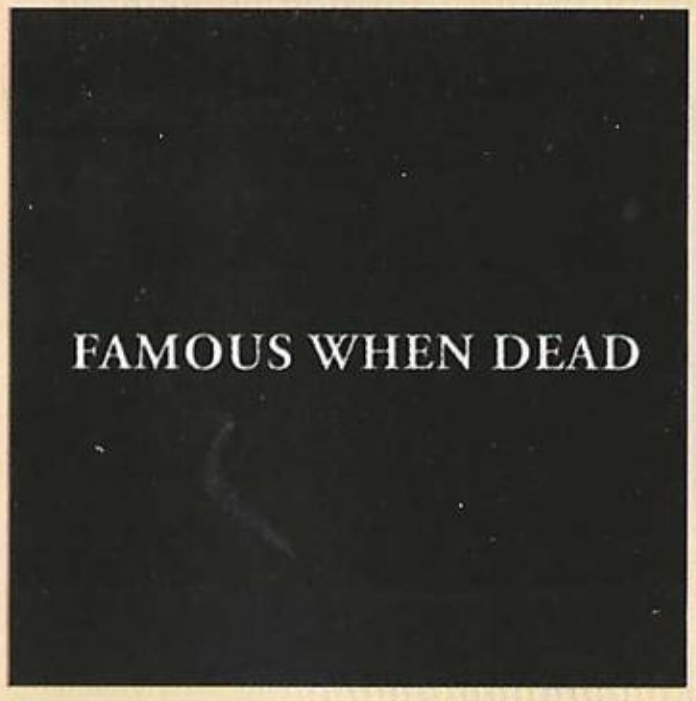
Friday 25 May
Craig Walsh Trancemetropolitan live pa
Steve Walker Jay Thompson
trash pool room
Oscar (trash recordings)
Abduction and co

Friday 27 april
Groove Asylum Hydraulix (Don't records) live pa
Helmet Klunk Abduction (sci-fing)
Steve Walker Jay Thompson
trash pool room
Oscar Rich Dolby Manu

Friday 22 june
Cold Dust live pa
x-clusive uk date (red seal - black & white)
Jon Nuccle Mike Humphries
Craig Walsh Special Guest t.b.c (red seal - black & white)
Steve Walker Jay Thompson
room 2 Abduction rest t.b.c chillout,
Oscar (trash recordings) Mowgli

Kanzleramt 53
Alexander Kowalski: echoes/phasis
12"

After a turbulent year with numerous very successfull releases as Alexander Kowalski, d_func, Dis X 3, Mr. Discotheque and as part of Double X, 2001 began for Alexander Kowalski with the final recordings of his debut-album. The ka53 maxi "Echoes / Phasis" containing the album`s title-track "Echoes and the B-Side "Phasis" (exclusive on this maxi), both in 2 versions, will be published in advance. don't miss your chance to pre-listen on this 12inch what you can expect on the upcoming album!



Playhouse CD 03 / Playhouse LP 50
Various Artists: famous when dead
CD/3xLP

Due to the 50th 12" release anniversary, PLAYHOUSE finally releases its first long awaited compilation CD featuring artists like ISOLÉE, BLAZE, LOSOUL and more... »PLAYHOUSE - FAMOUS WHEN DEAD.« "...the »not to be missed« compilation of the glorious Playhouse label." (Spex Magazine 03/01, Germany's most famous serious Music Magazine)

Bitter Sweet Music 04
Pino Shamlou: Iulina
12"

Pino Shamlou (Stir/Lo-Fi), producer from Mainhatten (Frankfurt), produced three tech-house tracks by magic, from the Lake Clark Studios directly on Bitter Sweet Music. With a touch of drum and base sounds and groovy housebeats, the hips will definitly not standing motionless. Who want's to feel some sun, positive energy or a smile on their faces on dreary and cold days like now - and - who can't wait for the "great" summer in germany..., will say: "Thanx Pino!" ...enjoy...

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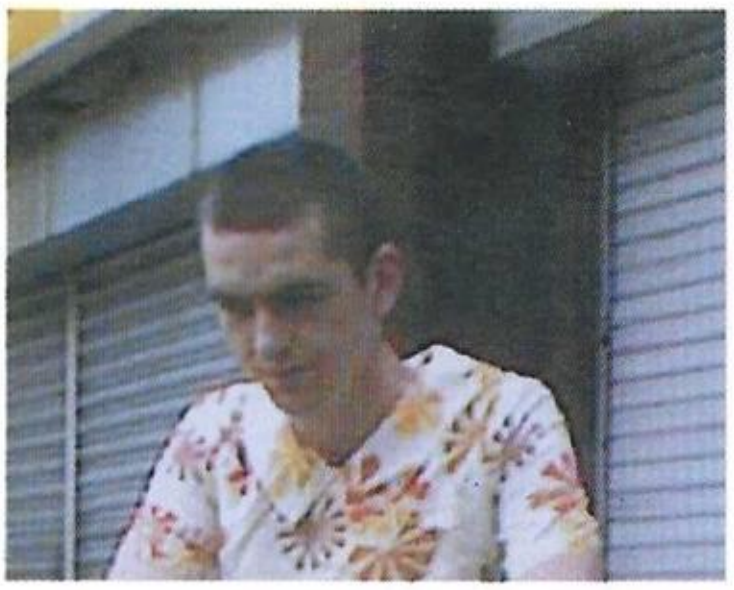
Take a twenty-something from Poland, throw in a bit of middle American and a hint of Japanese, some junglist beats, sub-bass, a laptop and the singing of a small child... and you have your very own BOGDAN RACZYNSKI.

His music sounds like its travelled from a war-zone into a playground - perhaps, because in essence, that's what's happened to him. Moving from Poland with his parents at the age of seven to escape the nightmares of Communism, he relocated to America, then Japan, and then spent a brief spell in the UK where has was banished by the British Government, thus resettling in his current outpost of Toronto, Canada. Although his passion for maths and a personal colour-to-number conversion system may serve to elude, Raczynski's complex compositions challenge any beat-freak to a junglist duel, with cheeky little songs so infectious you end up singing them all day long in a high pitched voice. Having just returned from playing the 'Rice Haters Tour' in Japan, Overload's ZWEI KATZEN got her claws stuck into an internetview with the cross-dressing king of chaotic-step.



WORDS> Zwei Katzen

Bogdan Raczynski

What are your influences? Who or what inspires you?

Love, lack of love, food, leaves, software, cuddling, arguing with my love, chocolate.

How would you describe your music?

www.bogdanraczynski.com

How did you get involved in Rephlex?

They heard about my exploits in Brazil. I lived in Brazil for about six months and had a crazy farm growing potatoes and squash. I did an album with a 100 year-old man who played trap set while I did trumpet - Ala Gato Barbieri - he's my star. So Rephlex heard some bootlegs on the Brazilian pirate station in London (Burritos FM). Big ups to my man CARLOS WALLACE MAGIQUE! They were going rampage like the game where you're the dinosaur going from town to town pillaging and causing aural mayhem. They got in touch, they brought me over for a big tour, we raised the roof in Japan and burned down some clubs and the rest is sweet caress.

Have you any new stuff out soon or new projects on the go?

Many. I'm so busy I can't even find time to wash my panties. Finished a remix for Systemic Noise, doing some more remixes for some labels in England, China, Japan and Brazil, got an album coming out in China under Jue Wang Kee records (shaolin speed garage ™ LP), learning to cook, trying to make money so I can eat, more remixes for superstars and bums. I've also possibly got an album or two and a single or two coming out next year.

Who does your artwork?

I commission my 8 year old brother, Jasiu to do it. He works strictly under Linux. He listens to the material and deliberates on constructing a theme and then works for 2-3 weeks on laying it out - super-tight. He's producing my next album. I've decked him out with a magical studio for aural experimentation. Hi Jasiu!

Raczynski

Your beats are very junglist. What do you think of the British drum and bass scene - Roni Size, Technical Itch etc?

If Tech Itch is as YOZ as his beats then hook me up on a blind date. Most of my junglist technology training came from when I was living in London, listening to the pirates (shouts to ma bitches on the radar!). Running through back alleys in East London with a portable, trying not to get my head smashed in cuz I was a whitey in the wrong part of town, just trying to catch some freq's. Damn radio wave limitations. I ran with my smashed up laptop recording the jilted audio, you know the kind of filtered noise that results from the dial being in between two radio stations.

What is it like living in Canada? Whats the "scene" like? Do you see many moose?

The scene is crazy underground megalopolosis. There are night-time scratchers and cardboard enthusiasts clubs a many. I frequent an event called 'River' based around participatory sound strangulation, cooking, nudity and sheer darkness (visually). People think IDM [intelligent dance music] is the new cats fanny lips, but I'm lucky enough to be privvy to the mad set up going on in my neck of the woods. I'm starting my own night-time patrol gang. We scour the streets and fight crime. We also drink lots of booze and yell at macho fucks and dirty bitches. We don't cause trouble, we don't bother nobody.

What was the music scene like where you lived as a boy? What did you grow up listening to?

I grew up listening to Frank Jankovic classics like 'Who Stole The Kieshka' and 'Beer Barrel Polka'. Time honoured traditions that still resonate in my heart to this day. I can still smell the sausage now...

What do you prefer - dresses or trousers?

Depends on the fabric and design. I've seen some nice skirts and dresses. I don't make a habit of wearing them though. There's a really fulfilling trouser scene here in Canada. It's invigorating.

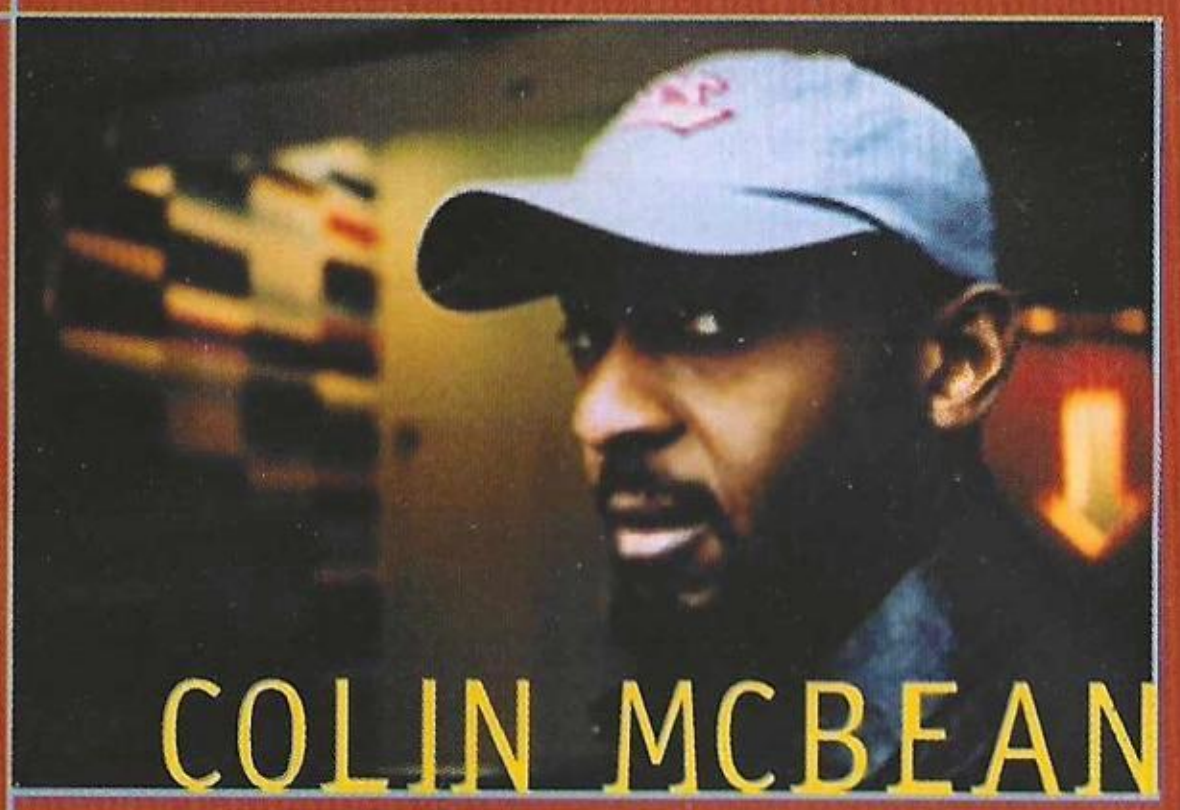
Techno or 2-step?

Shaolin speed garage. Check the carnage in China coming out soon!

Have you got an important message for the world?

YOZ!

There's a raw new sound raising clubs to the ground, and it belongs to MR G, AKA ex-Advent collaborator COLIN McBEAN.



Having spent five years with Cisco Ferreira as The Advent unleashing killer release after killer release and co-running one of the best live PAs on the circuit, Colin McBean has undoubtedly helped sculpt today's techno topography. But when the mental and physical pressure of constant touring became too much to bear, a return to his roots beckoned. "People were always talking saying Cisco was the boy and Colin wasn't doing much..." he recounts without acrimony. With Cisco fulfilling the role of the duo's engineer, Colin began to feel discounted as the lesser half of the partnership, a public perception fortified by his unrestrained dancing activities that would always please the crowds at their shows. "There came a point where you'd go to places and they'd say 'your dancer was wicked mate' and I'd be like 'what?' I did tweak things on stage, do you know what I'm saying?"

And so it was that a period of studio confinement followed. Cisco continued apace with The Advent whilst Colin, who'd already begun to forge his own more house-orientated sound under the guise of Mr G, began an ongoing process of technical familiarisation and taking stock of previous influences. "First and foremost my love was going to second hand record shops and finding old records, before I was a producer" he comments. "Can you imagine all those years later, those records are your library of sound, your knowledge. 'Let's try a bit of Salsa today' - you pull out a bit of Salsa and you think 'that's interesting' and you take inspiration from that."

"If it's got a dirty end I'm happy with it."

Growing up in Derby, UK, he spent time living in Manchester, Paris and Germany before settling in London back in 1982. Always the avid vinyl junkie ("I've got 32,000 records - I'm the world's greatest blagger of getting records"), he worked as a trained chef and then a fashion designer for the likes of Stussy and Betty Jackson before finally finding his way with music production. It was time spent with a Derby-based reggae sound system during his formative years that ingrained his musical consciousness with a potent dose of swing, soul and bottom end. "I come from a family where we'd listen to Jim Reeves and all that nonsense" he elaborates. "Reggae is where the roots came from. My job was to lift the speakers in and out of the van, so I used to sit on the floor as a kid and there'd be thumping bass, that was *me*. As I became older I was the selector, the guy choosing the records, then DJ, and it was like 'okay I've had enough of reggae, lets find something else'. I realised my love was with analogue, so I moved from there into things like Cabaret Voltaire, Bauhaus, Human League all those kind of things, then to house, techno. That's how I met Cisco."

Although he's avoided flirtation with the press since the split two years ago,' 'Mr G' is speedily acquiring his own private section in record boxes the world over, from Richie Hawtin and Carl Cox to Danny Rampling and Tall Paul. "I had a lot to live up to production-wise" Colin admits, all too aware of The Advent's highly influential dancefloor doctrine. So, what happened when, after five years of turning up the heat in techno clubs, he became reacquainted with his love of bassy, soulful music? Well one thing's for sure, the tempo came down a few notches. Recently attaining double figures, his Phoenix G imprint has indubitably helped blur the line between house and techno. Clocking in at a tempo to tempt aficionados of both, there are few productions that fulfil the criteria of the cursed 'tech-house' tag with such unreserved sincerity. From a trainspotter standpoint, it would be easy to draw parallels with the Advent sound - the sense of flow, the hypnotic percussion changes, the intense waves of hi-hats that lock you in to the groove. Yet Mr G's sound is now very much his own; a tough and twisted yet soulful vibe that's seen his music well and truly cross over from the murky belly of the underground, earning remix requests from lofty luminaries like Bob Sinclair and Roger Sanchez. "It's that dirty mid-ground, it's twisted and funky, bass-heavy but accessible" he tells. "I'm a reggae boy, it's not about the clarity it's about a low bottom end swing, something that makes the girls jump up and down. If it's got a dirty end I'm happy with it."

The past twelve months have found him in possession of a prolific release schedule, recording for stables such as Mr C's End Recordings, Carl Cox's In-Tec, Mike Grant's Moods & Grooves, Marco Lenzi's Molecular and even Tall Paul's Duty Free. "I give everybody the sound I hear. Mr C's EP it's how I hear C play. I know that every track I give him he can play in his set. Tall Paul is either tribal or more progressive. Mike Grant's remix is real American soul." With his reggae-tinged alter ego 'Mango Boy' doing damage in the clubs and a double pack release imminent for London dance giant Defected, there's been plenty of call to get Colin (a self-professed 'ex'-clubber) back out on the circuit. Not something he's fervent to pursue in the short term: "My hearing at the end of the Advent was almost shot and it's just perfect now - no warbles, no tinitus, and no backache, no lack of sleep. I've got some prime moments, some wonderful moments, but I'm not in a hurry to go back there."

When he does decide to take Mr G on the road it'll be, like his erstwhile partner, preferentially performing live ("when I go live believe me, I'm going to drop bombs on heads"). But surely there's going to be calls to get this veteran selector back behind the decks too? Just where's his spinning style at these days? "I ain't got no style," he pipes, "that's why when I DJ it's really interesting. I still love and buy soulful house, proper soulful house. Some people might call it dead leg smoky grooving house. In the same way I still like my tech stuff, I still like my electro, I still like my minimal, I just tend to put it all in the pot and see what comes out." Any other thoughts on what makes a good DJ, then? "Not just faster, faster, faster - it's too easy" Colin replies. "Like when you're having sex, you don't do it in the same way every time. The orgasm is sometimes early, sometimes late, that's how you peak when you're DJing. Sometimes you want to peak in the middle of your set, sometimes at the end, sometimes at the start. Sometimes you peak early and have to build it up again. You get these DJs that come on and they play all the hits in the first 45 minutes, whereas a good DJ takes it back, starts again."

Well, with in excess of ten releases ready to hit the shelves, there's certainly nothing lacking in Mr G's fertility department. "I'm enjoying it" he smiles, "I've never had so much fun in my life." Great, let's burn the fucking dancehall down.

MR G's 'Ten To Break Walls Down'

1) BIG YOUTH 'Miss Lou Ring A Ding'
2) SUKIA 'Feeling Free'
3) THE CURE 'Lullaby'
4) AZMUTH 'Dear L'
5) AGROVATORS & T McCOOK 'Bongo Man Dub'
6) MILES DAVIS 'Tutu'
7) FAZE O 'Riding High'
8) KOOL AND THE GANG 'Summer Madness'
9) SCHOOL 'Ain't No Love'
10) McCOY TYNER & P HYMAN 'I'll Be Around'

The 'Get It Got It Good EP' by Mr G is out on Defected at the end of April.

WORDS> Alex Ward

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Tresor.167

Dave Tarrida
Paranoid
CD/Do-EP 56161-2/6
Tresor.161

Singles

Dave Tarrida

Paranoid (Again)
Remixed by Cristian Vogel,
The Horrorist, Dave Tarrida,
Funk D'Void

MS 56162-6 **Tresor.**162

Various Artists

Archiv # 1
Tracks by Model 500,
Cristian Vogel, Daniel Bell

MS 56164-6 **Tresor.**164

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